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**WORLD'S
BEST-
SELLING
PS2 MAG!**

ONLY in PSM:

**LEGACY OF KAIN:
DEFIANCE**

SSX 3

**TEENAGE MUTANT
NINJA TURTLES**

**4th ANNUAL
SWIMSUIT
SPECIAL**

11 PAGES of our
HOTTEST pictures **EVER!**

**VIRTUA FIGHTER 4:
EVOLUTION**

BETTER Graphics,
NEW Characters,
MORE Modes!

**MIDNIGHT CLUB &
AUTO MODELLISTA**

RULE ONLINE: The games'
CREATORS show you how!

HANDS-ON: Final Fantasy X-2, Soul Calibur II

◀ *Soul Calibur II's*
Cassandra soaks up
the sun inside,
along with 20
other game girls!

**20
NEW
GAMES!**

72

**LORD OF
THE RINGS:
RETURN OF THE KING**

YOU DEMANDED IT: The
Hobbits and Gandalf
finally join in for fierce
Two-Player action!



16

**RATCHET &
CLANK 2**

FIRST SCREENS of the
new weapons, outfits,
worlds and more!



36

**LEGACY OF KAIN:
DEFIANCE**

EXCLUSIVE 1st look at the
daring new direction of
the *Kain* series!

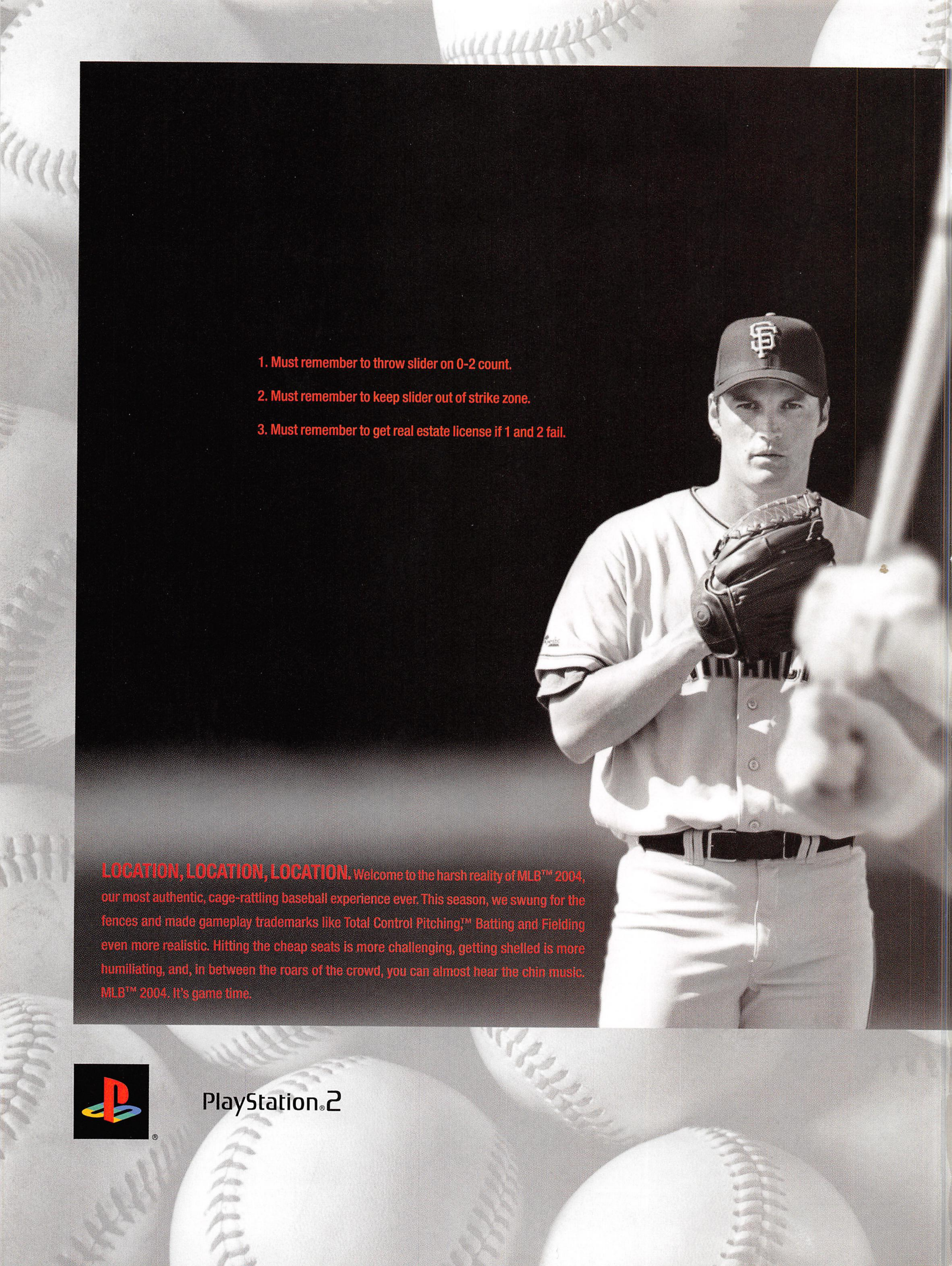
PLUS

- ▶ .hack//MUTATION
- ▶ Jak II
- ▶ Virtual On Marz
- ▶ Fear Effect Inferno
- ▶ Four Horsemen
- ▶ Spy Hunter 2
- ▶ Maximo 2
- ▶ Fatal Frame 2

er: OS



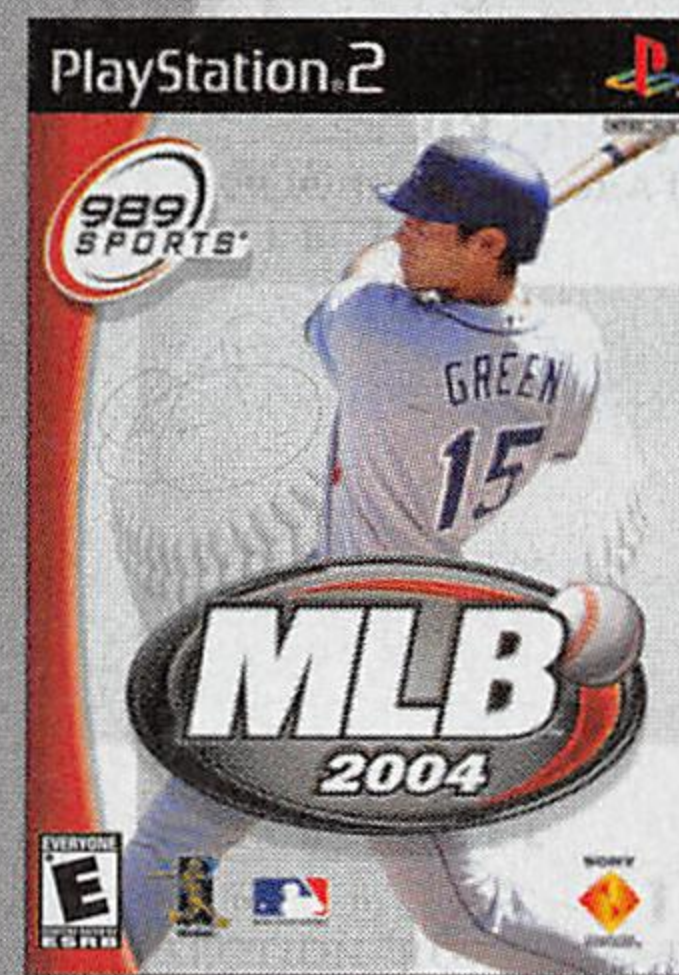
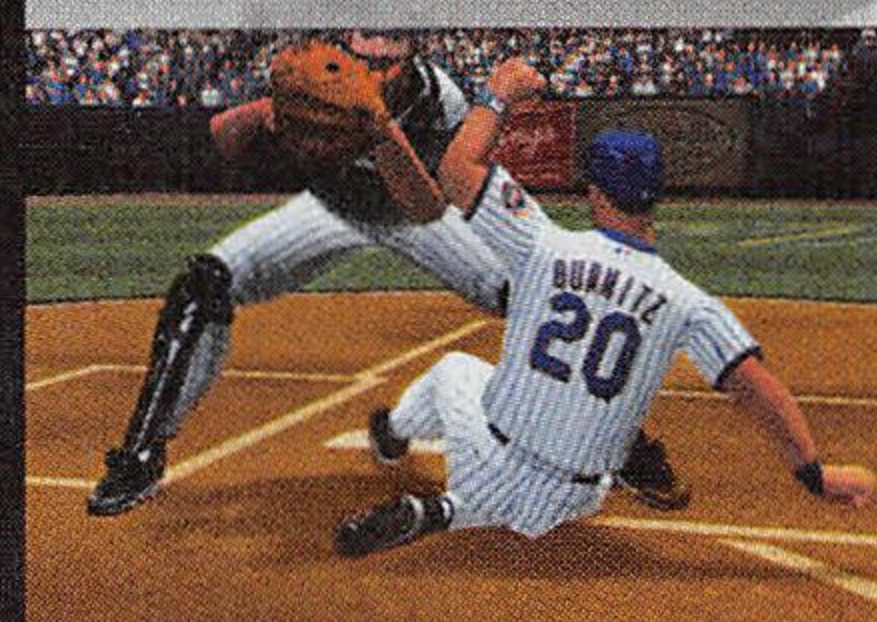
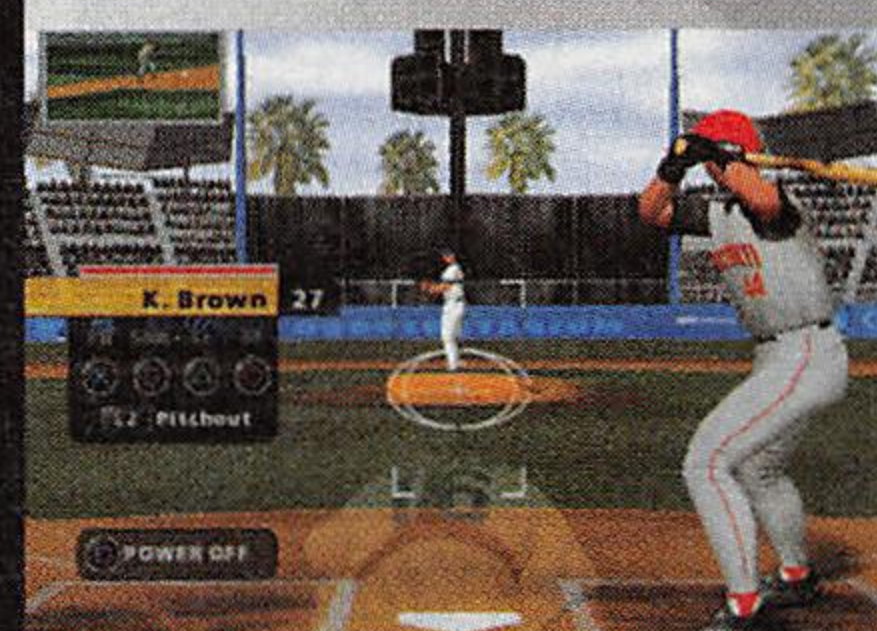
The first choice for gamers

- 
1. Must remember to throw slider on 0-2 count.
 2. Must remember to keep slider out of strike zone.
 3. Must remember to get real estate license if 1 and 2 fail.

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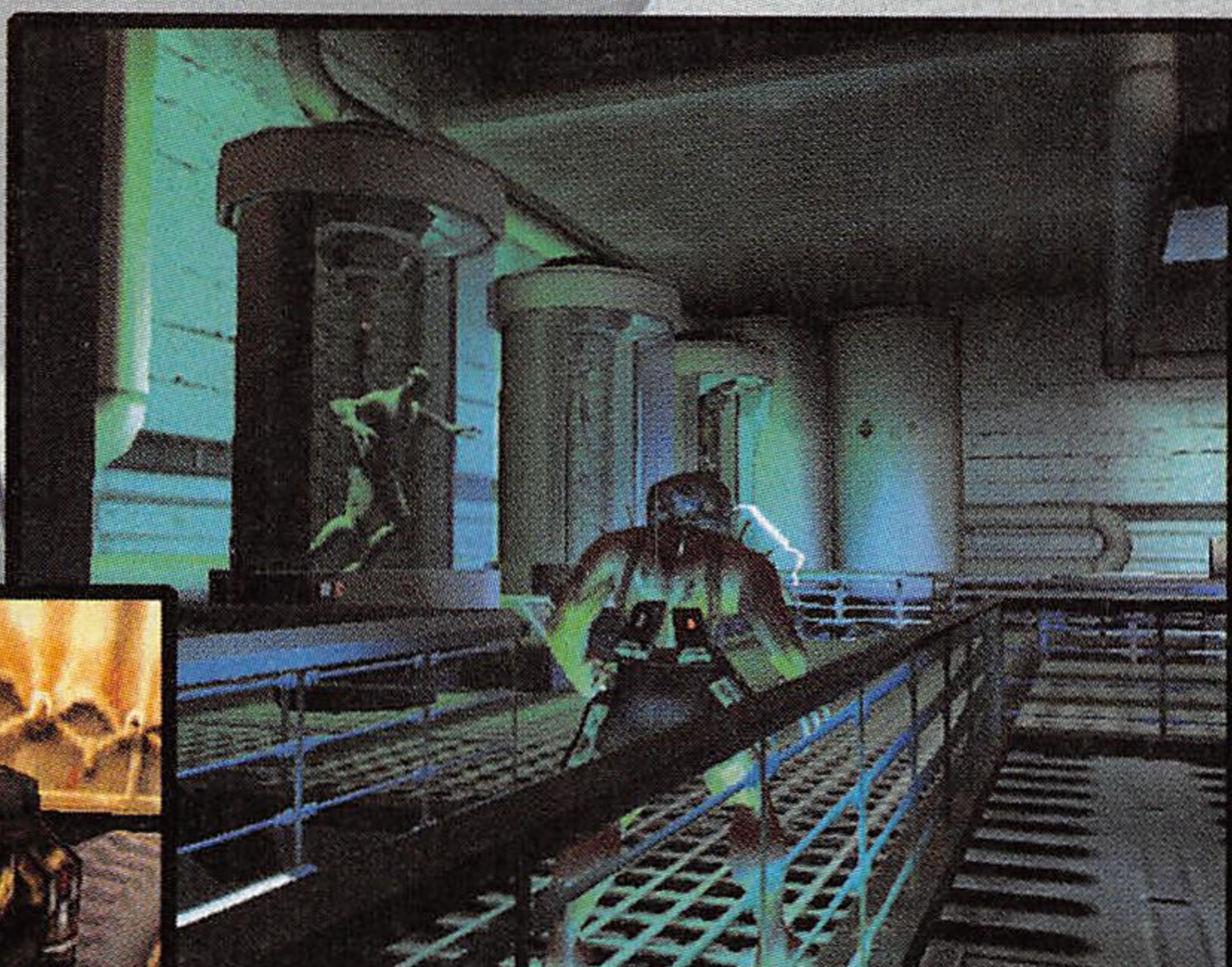
PlayStation®2



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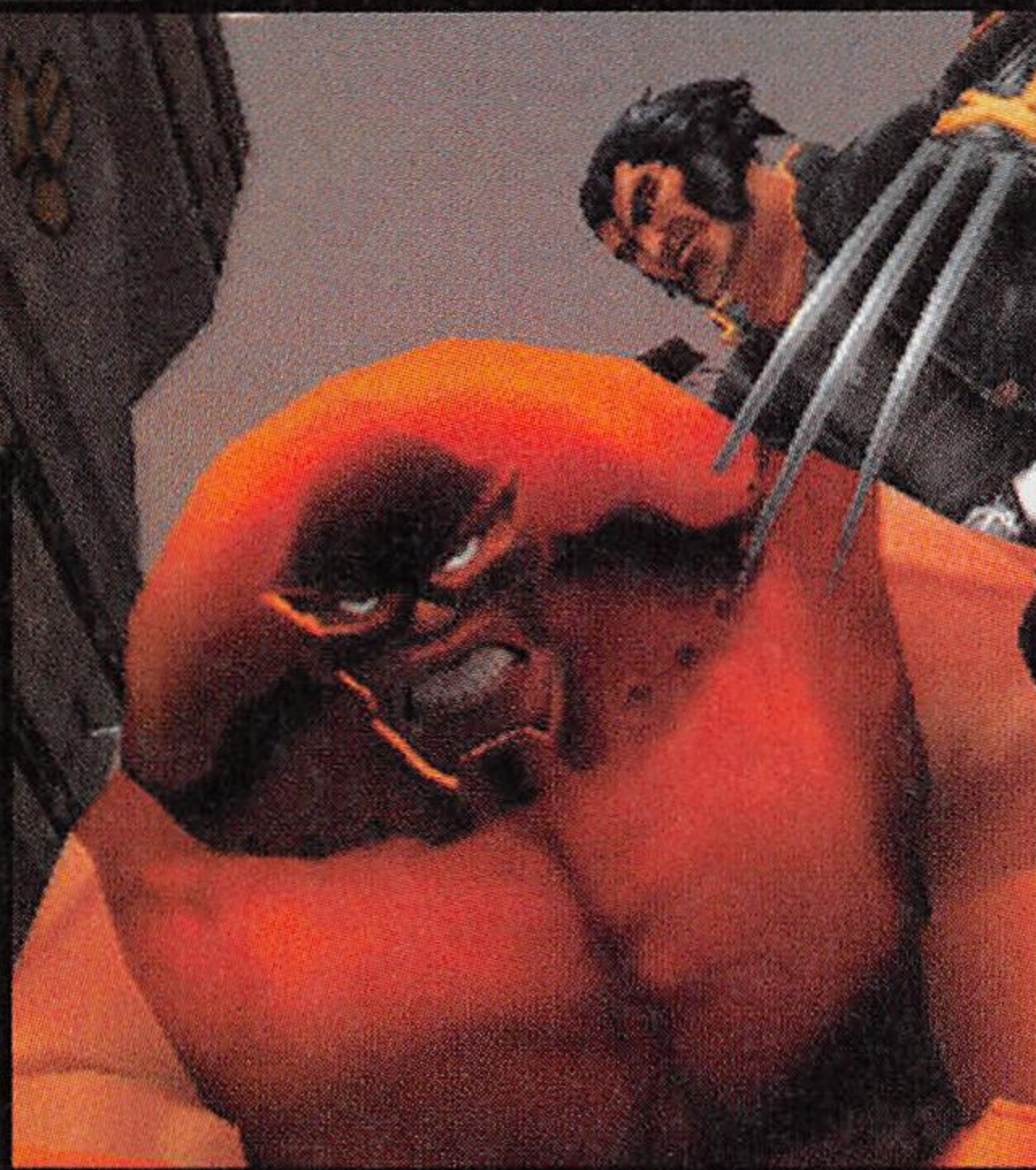
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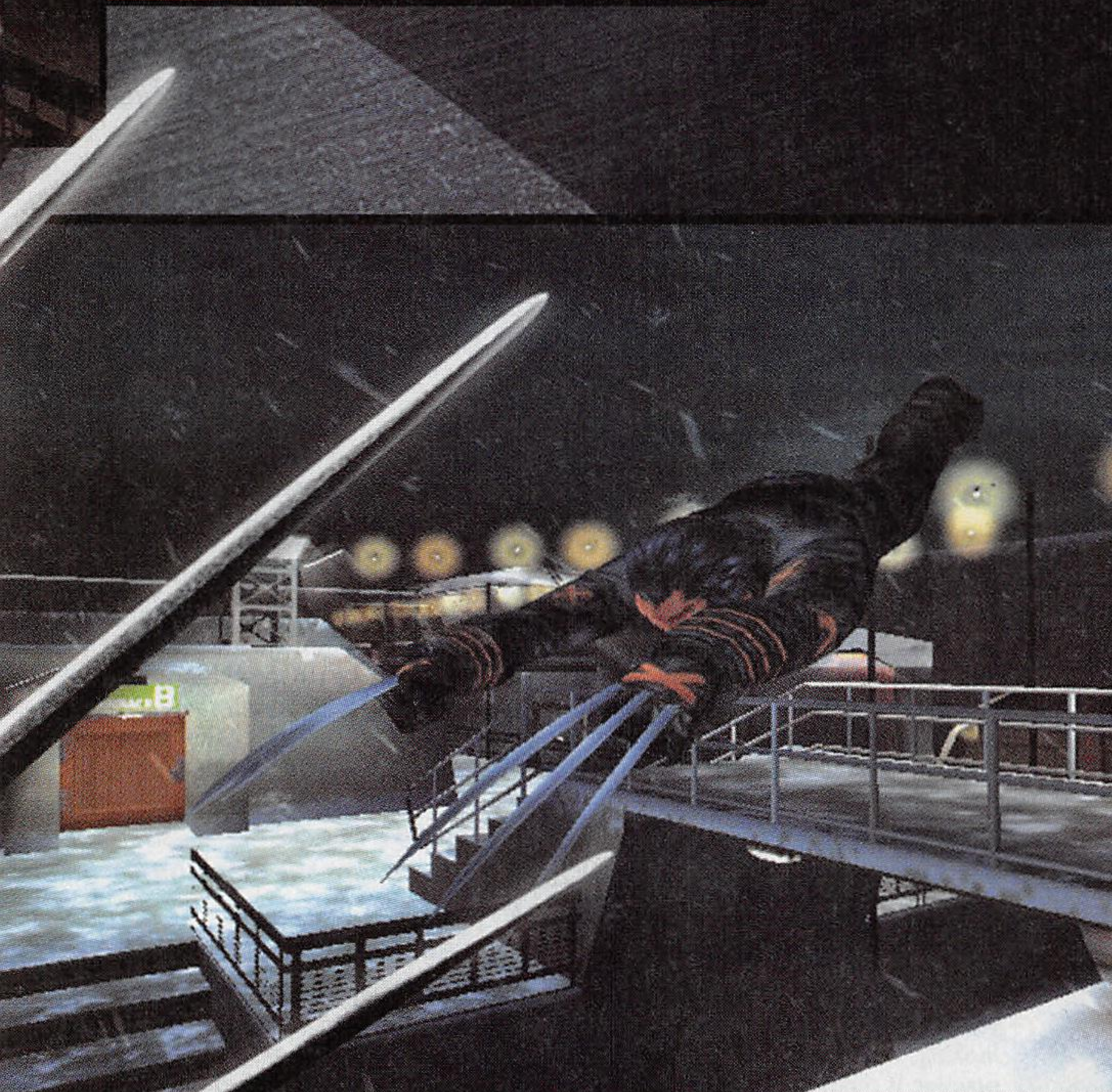
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Violence

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PlayStation®2



GAME BOY ADVANCE

PC
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<< We work hard to give exclusives, as a "thank you" for your support >>

EDITOR'S LETTER

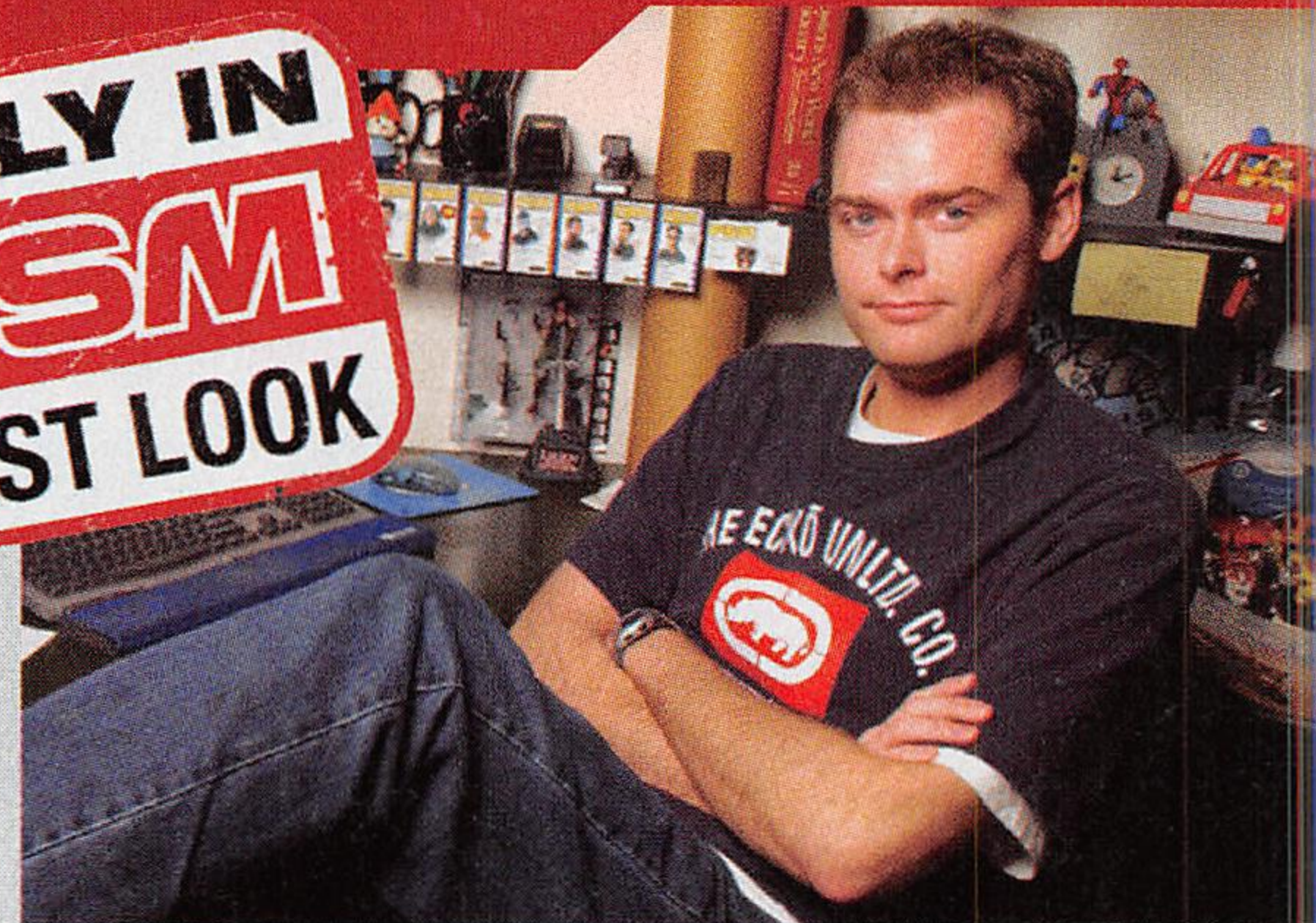
First and best game coverage—only in PSM

ONLY IN PSM FIRST LOOK

Being the world's best-selling PS2 magazine has its advantages. Game publishers want their games to be seen by the widest possible audience, and they also want to target rabid, hardcore players. That makes PSM readers the most valuable readership anywhere. With you guys backing us up, we get more exclusive first looks, game screens and info than anybody else on the planet.

Starting this issue, you'll see our "Only In PSM" stamp all over the place. We're using it to call your attention to the really good stuff that you're guaranteed to *only* find in our magazine. We work hard to give exclusives, as a "thank you" for your support (*everybody else can read about this stuff a month later*).

When you sit down to play the next big game, remember where you saw the first, and best, coverage — PSM. **CHRIS SLATE**



CHRIS SLATE Editor-In-Chief

LIKES: Adventure games, platformers and everything else

HOBBIES: Comics, hoops, DVDs, movies, anime, drawing, iPod

How do you beat the heat?

I take a giant fan made to cool a warehouse, put it on "High" and point it at me while I sleep. The pneumonia is kind of a drag, but at least I keep cool!

MEET the TEAM

Ever wonder what a crack team of videogame journalists looks like? ...Aw, c'mon folks, just work with us a little, here...



STEPHEN FROST SENIOR EDITOR

LIKES: Fighters & Lovers
HOBBIES: Technology

How do you beat the heat? I was actually never convicted of that crime, and my lawyer says I should never talk about it again.



RANDY NELSON REVIEWS EDITOR

LIKES: Shooters, Racers
HOBBIES: Action Figures

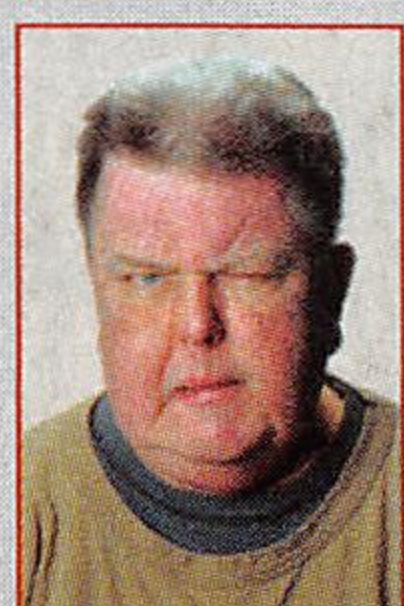
How do you beat the heat? Kick it in the stomach, then when it bends over in pain, kick it in the head. Repeat three times and he's toast!



ERIC BRATCHER ASSOCIATE EDITOR

LIKES: RPGs, Weird Imports
HOBBIES: Training fruit bats

How do you beat the heat? I hit the beach, preferably with my bodyboard, some libations, and a lifeguard to save me from drowning.



BILL DONOHUE MANAGING EDITOR

LIKES: polish-pope.com
HOBBIES: Selling CDs!

How do you beat the heat? All the readers know this one! Gimme a B... gimme an E... gimme an E... gimme an R! What's that spell?



DAN FITZPATRICK ART DIRECTOR

LIKES: Lots of babies!
HOBBIES: Making the above

How do you beat the heat? When the wife's not looking, I use the baby powder. It really cuts down on the chafing!



GARY LIEW ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR

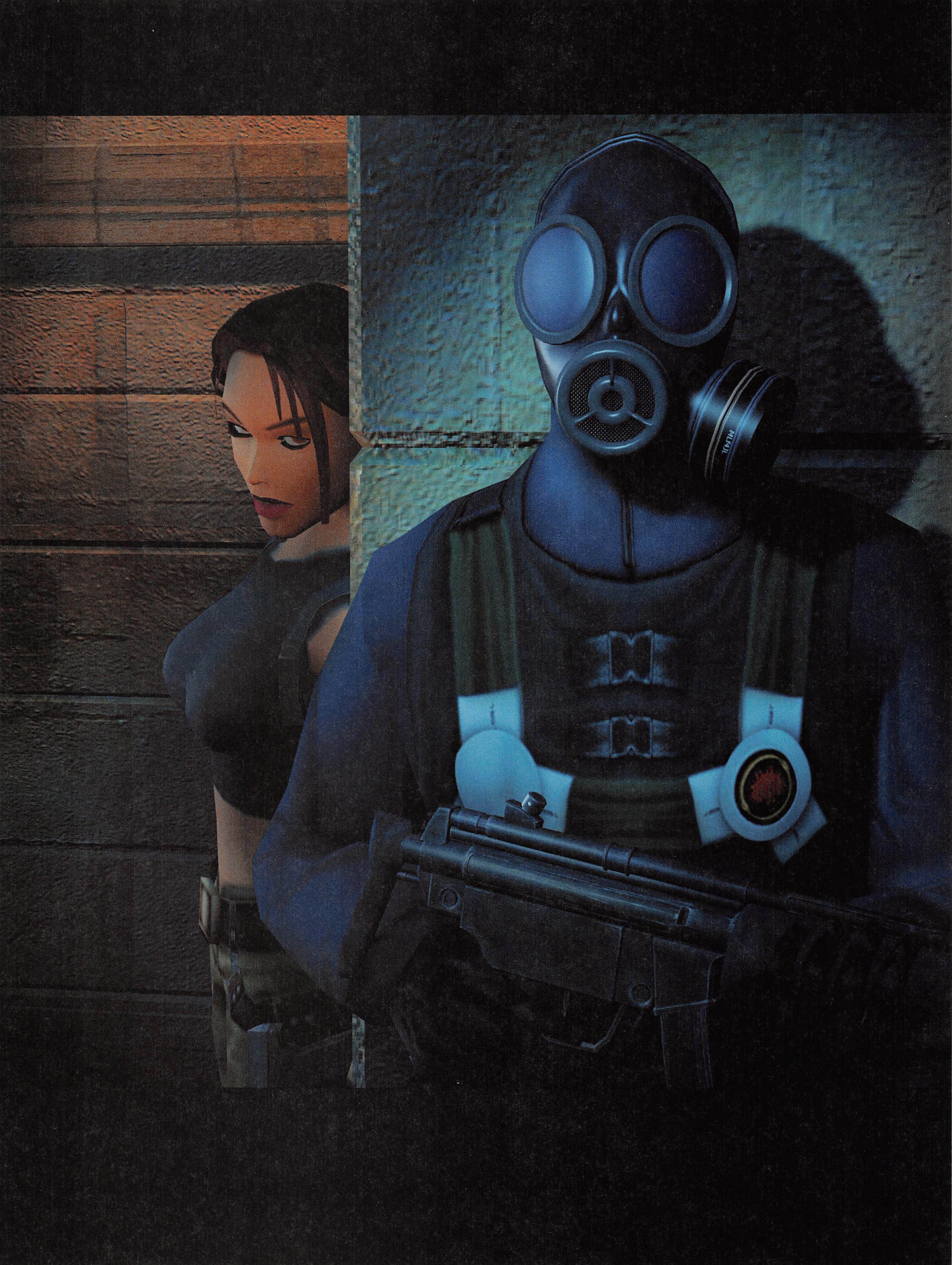
LIKES: Keeping cool
HOBBIES: Freezing shorts

How do you beat the heat? I am now to be living in the refrigerator. If only the light would stay on, I would be able to read.

ON THE COVER | W

e weren't going to have a Swimsuit Special this year, but then a bunch of game girls dropped by in their bikinis and begged us to take pictures. It was hard, grueling work... all of the giggling and pillow fights really wore us down.









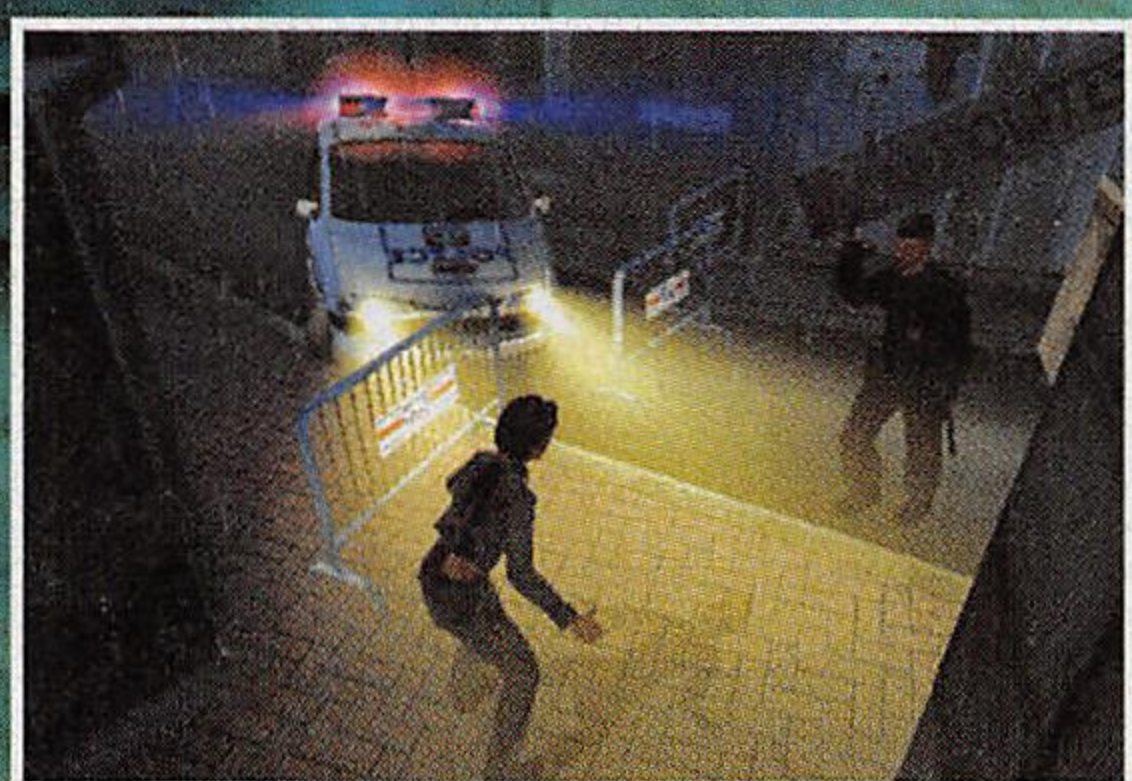
Out of the tombs. Into hell.



New 3D Engine and character control take full advantage of the latest technology.



Stealth and hand-to-hand attacks help remove anyone in your path.

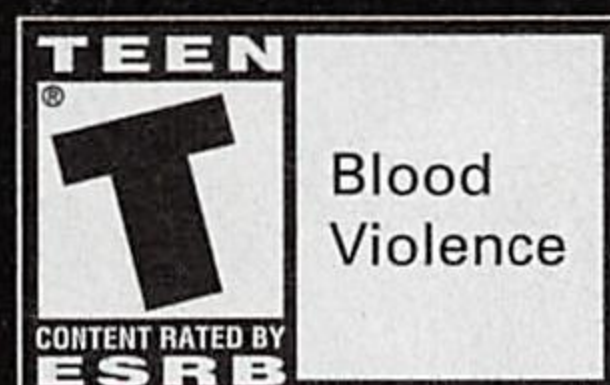


The gritty urban underbelly of Europe offers whole new environments.



Player/character Kurtis Trent brings his own distinct gameplay mechanics.

A bloody crime scene. A ritual killing. A shocking suspect. And so the daring pursuit of good becomes the desperate flight from evil. And if the dark forces arrayed against her believe she's incapable of the ultimate, they're about to learn a painful lesson: Payback's a bitch.

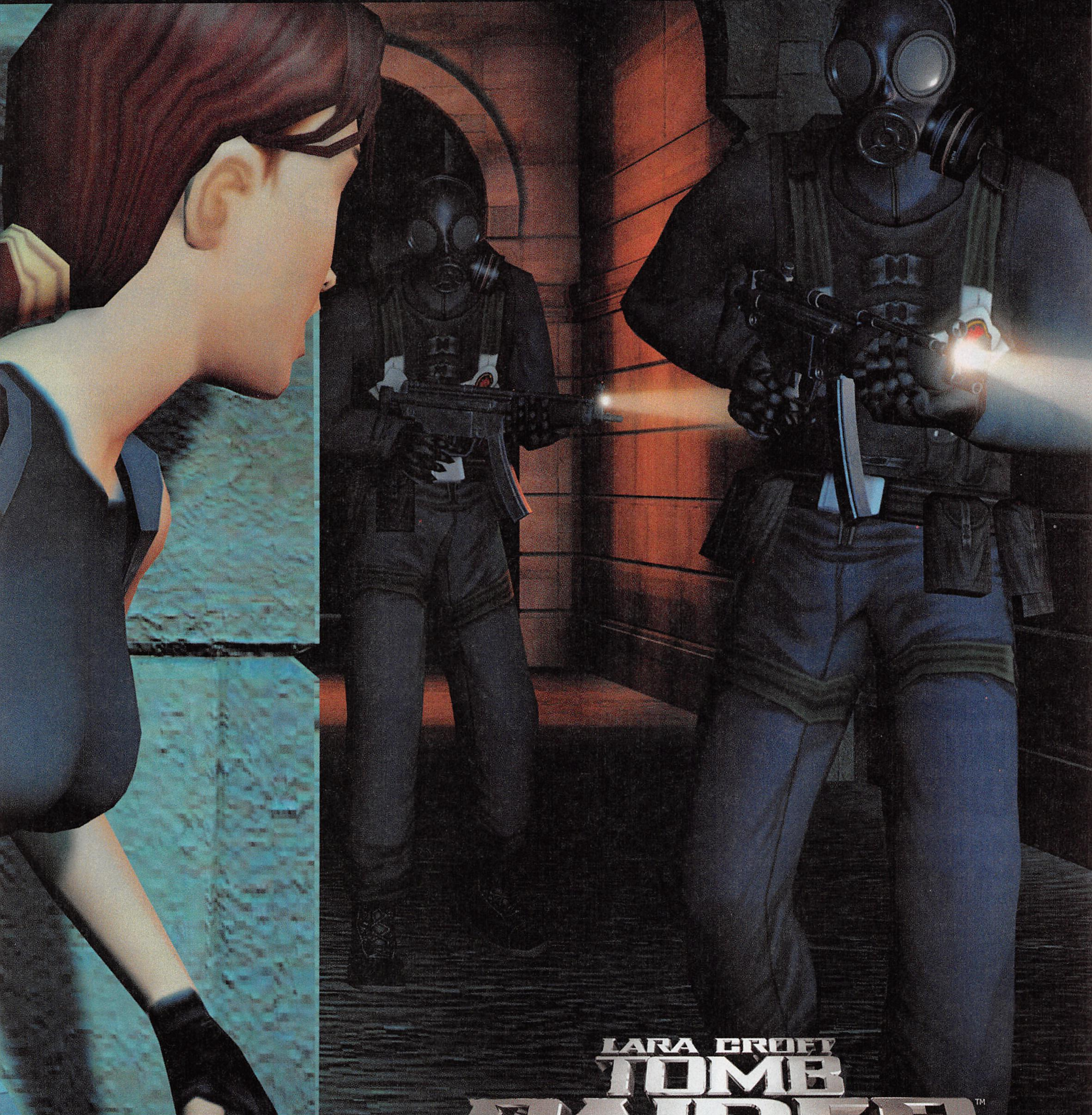


PC
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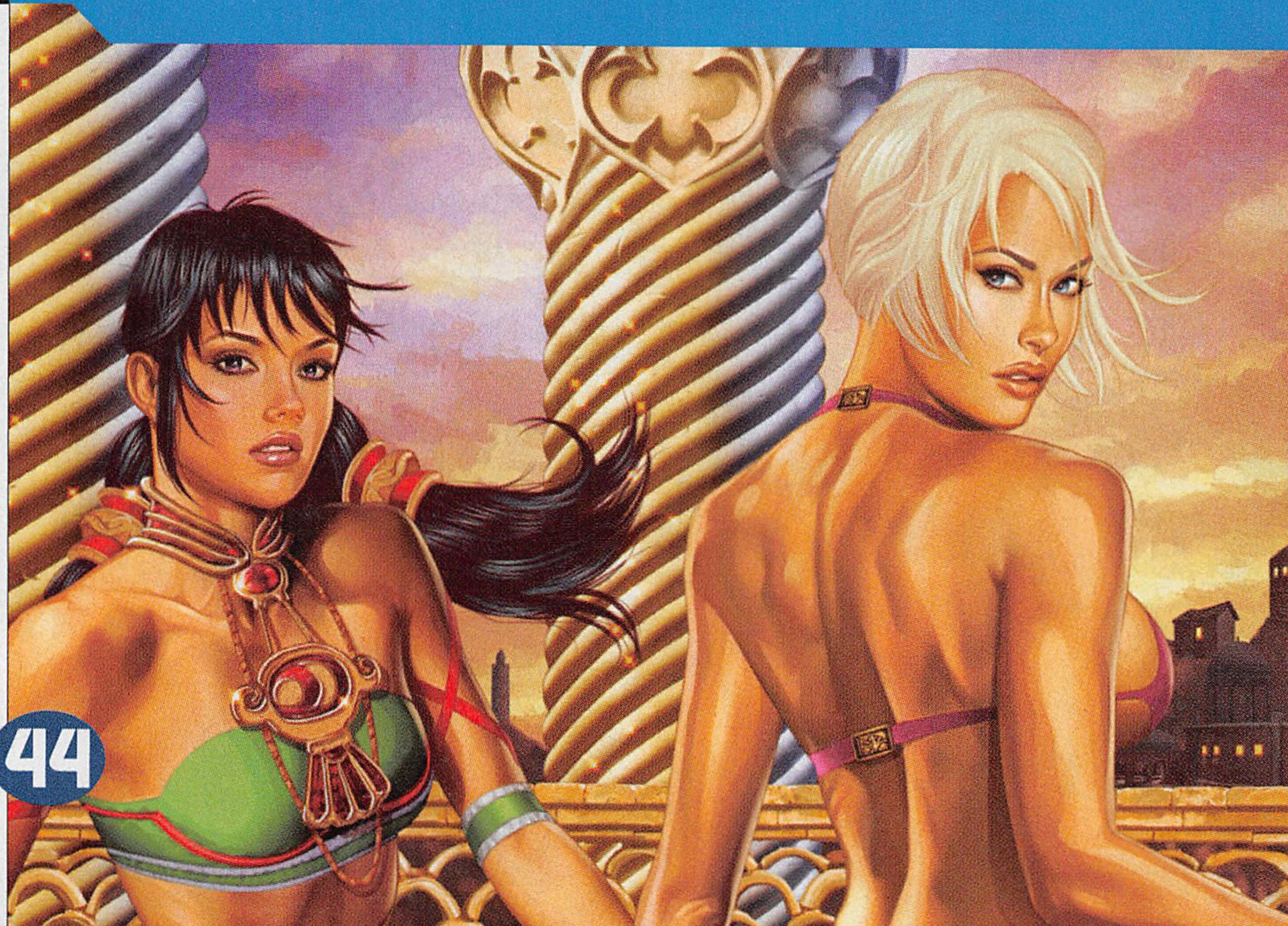
core
design

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

PlayStation®2



LARA CROFT
**TOMB
RAIDER**
the angel of darkness



44

SWIMSUIT SPECIAL!

PlayStation 2's hottest game girls go wild in our annual summer feature! 11 pages of scantily-clad beauties await you, starting on pg. 44!

<< LARA'S LEFT THE KILLING BEHIND FOR A LITTLE R&R... WELL, KIND OF... >>

NINJA TURTLES!

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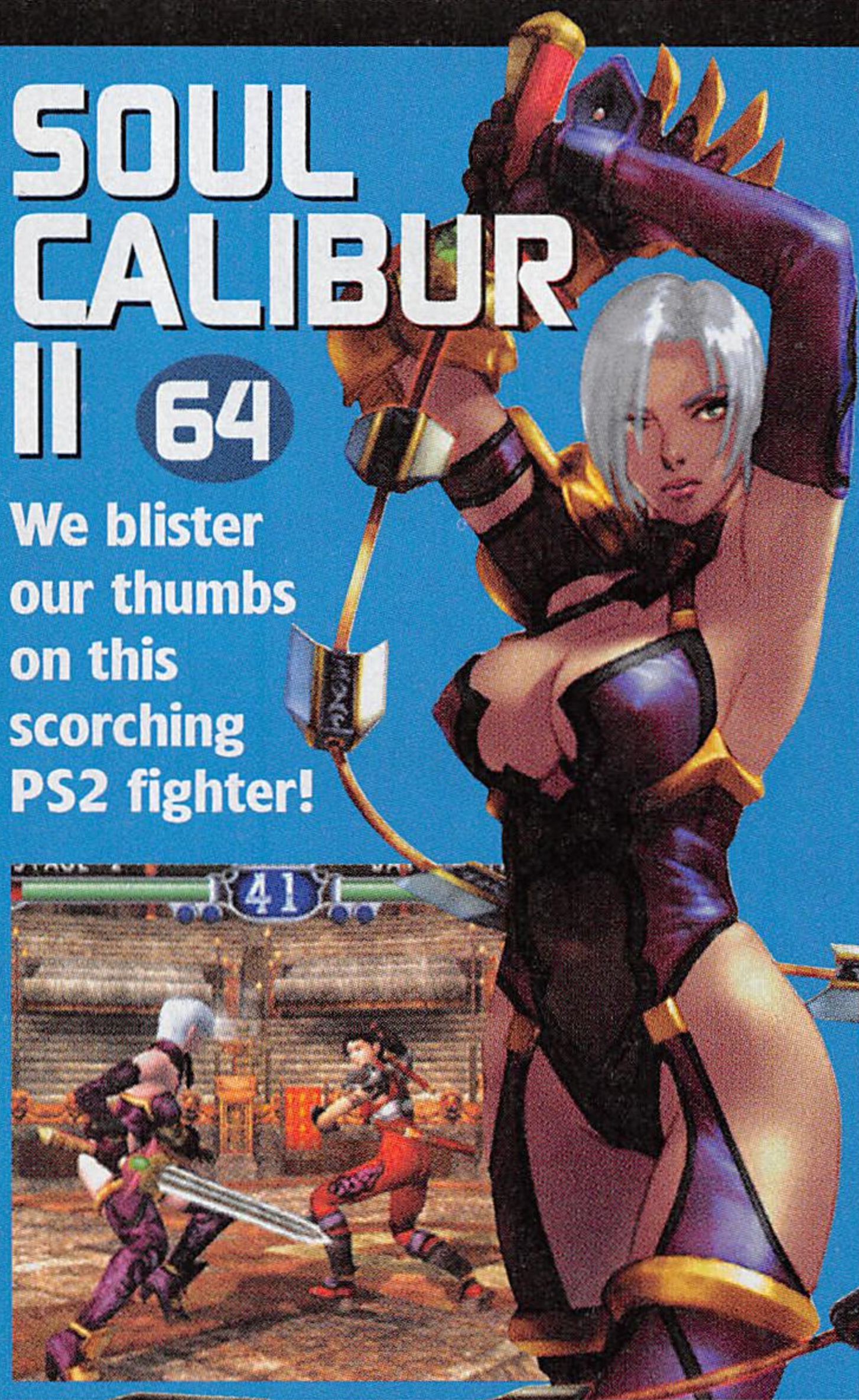
Be the first on your block to see the new *Turtles* game in action!



SOUL CALIBUR II

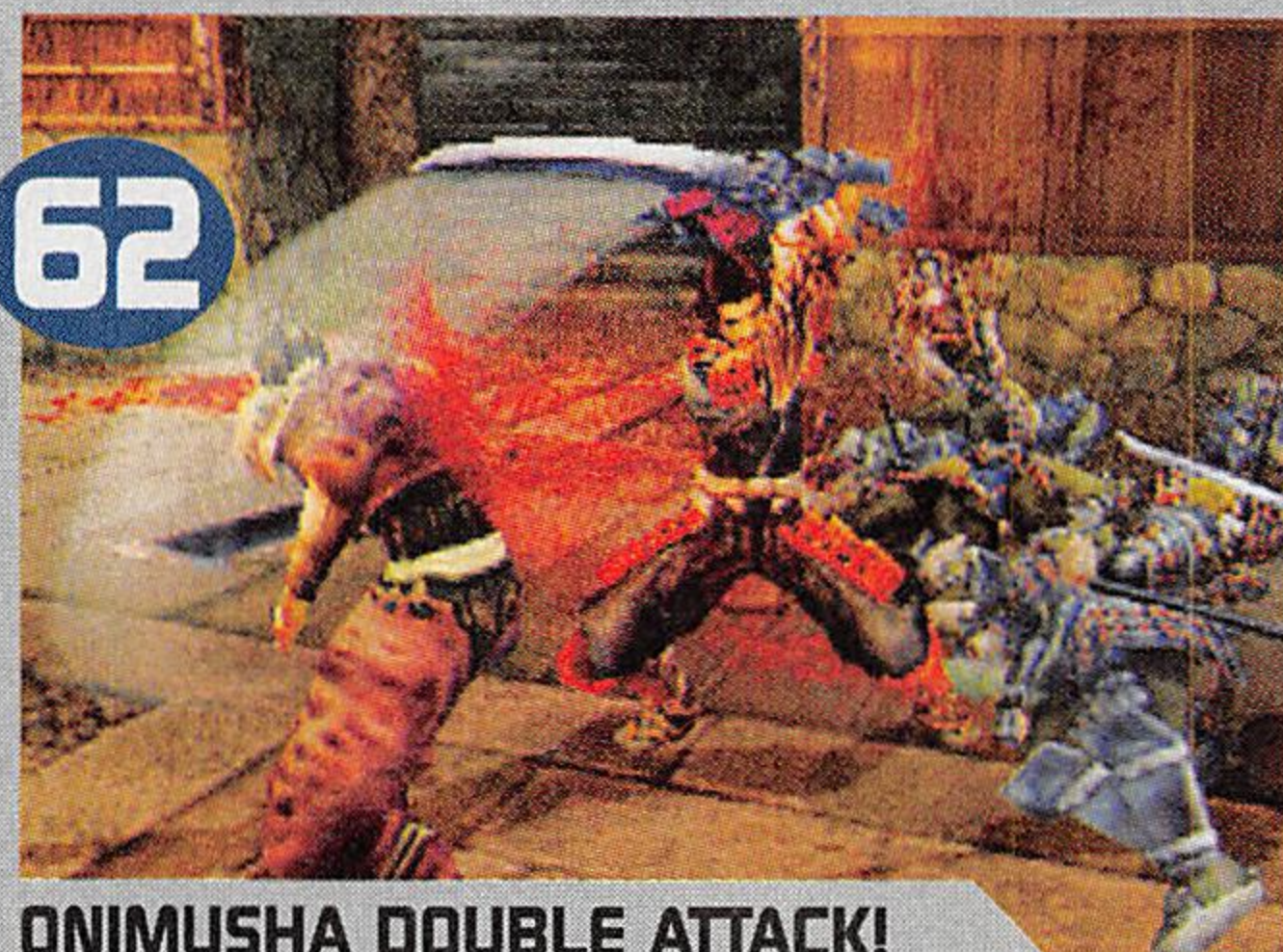
64

We blister our thumbs on this scorching PS2 fighter!



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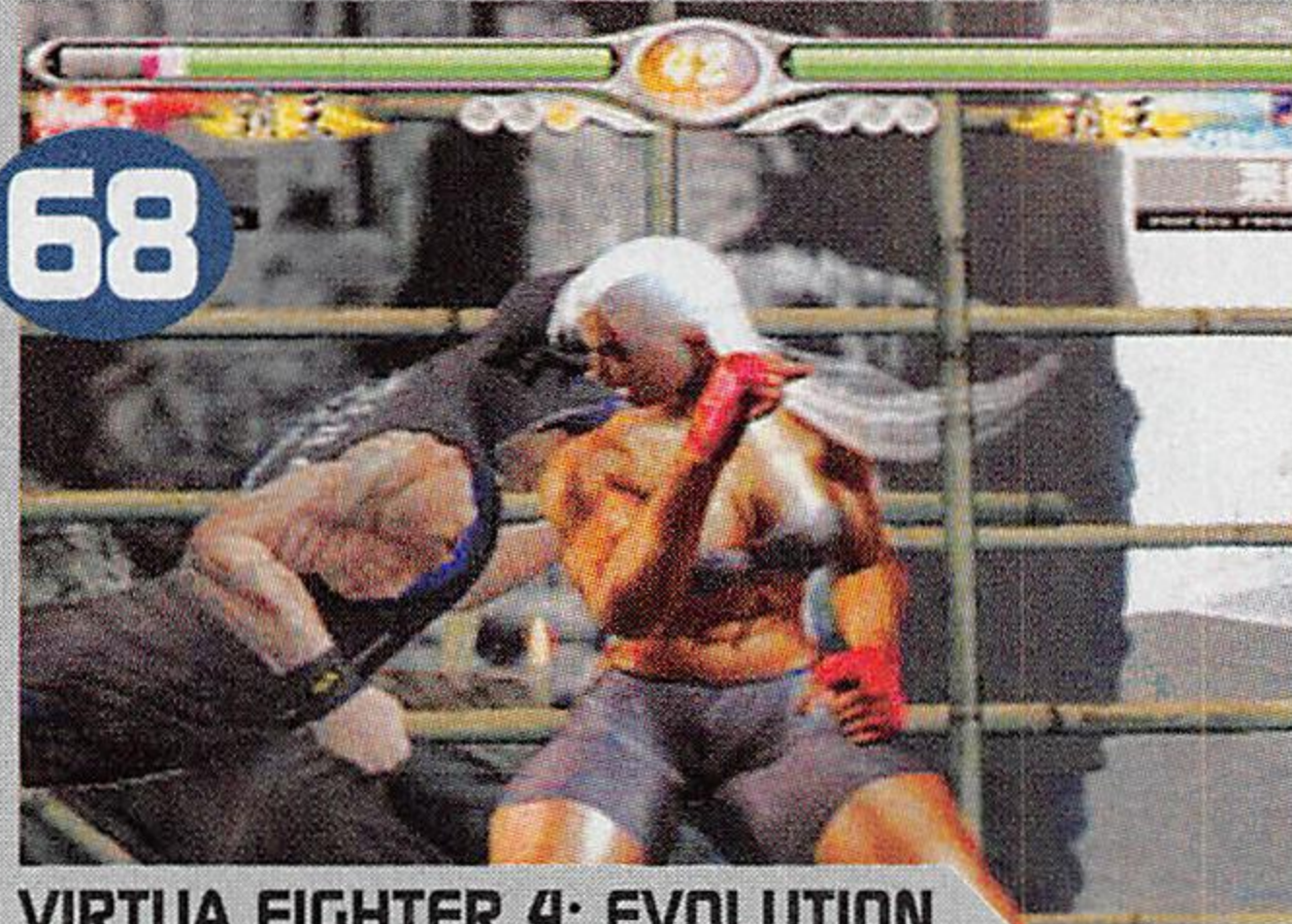
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ONIMUSHA DOUBLE ATTACK!

Two new games carry the *Onimusha* legend forward — and one of 'em is a fighter!

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VIRTUA FIGHTER 4: EVOLUTION

An old favorite evolves into a higher form! Check out the new characters on pg. 68!

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LORD OF THE RINGS: ROTK

Tolkien's stunning trilogy comes to an explosive conclusion!

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SYPHON FILTER: OMEGA STRAIN

Create your own character, go online, and try to save the world from a deadly virus!

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Raziel and Kain—together?!
Get your exclusive first look at the
biggest and best *Kain* game ever!



MONITOR

Your inside look at this month's
hot topics, gear and games

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The Turtles are *back*, man—
and only PSM's got 'em!



CHECKPOINT

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Your one-stop spot for cool
games, movies and gear that's
comin' your way

REVIEWS

The world's most accurate,
in-depth game reviews

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Just possibly the best racing
game available today!

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Tips, guides and cheats that
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MIDNIGHT CLUB II

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Tips straight from the creators!

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<< RISE FROM YOUR
GRAVE! ALTERED BEAST
IS RESURRECTED! >> pg. 18

MIDNIGHT CLUB II

Online or off, Rockstar's first game since *Vice City* is one of
the best racing games we've ever played — does
that mean we gave it a perfect "10"?

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PSM
GAME
OF THE
MONTH

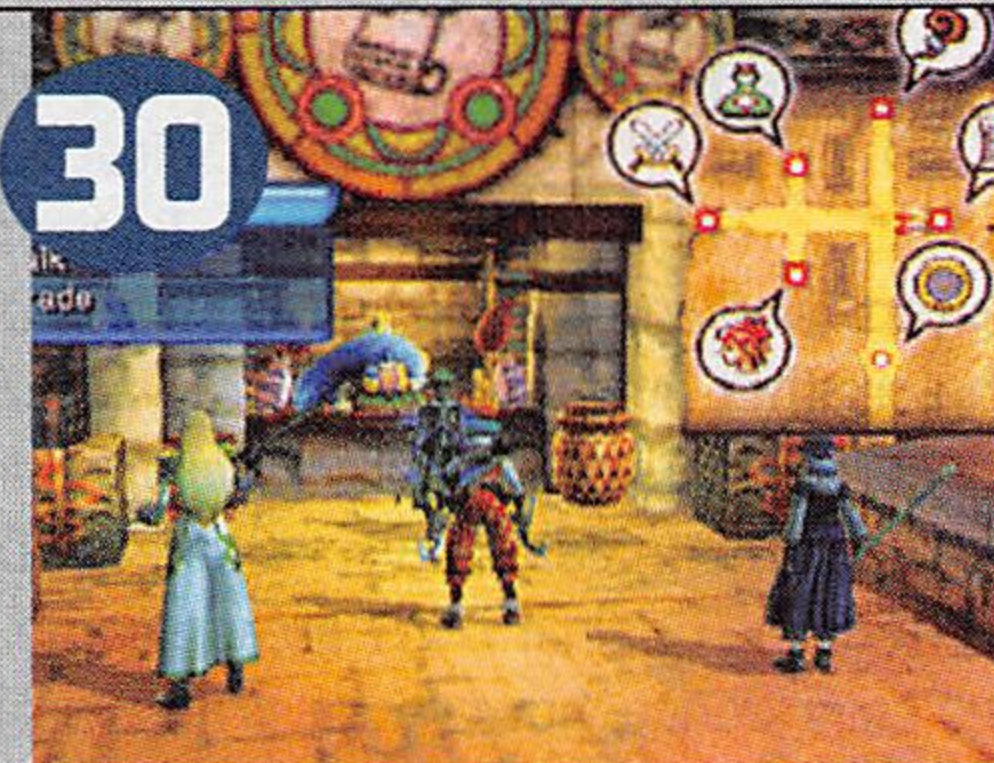
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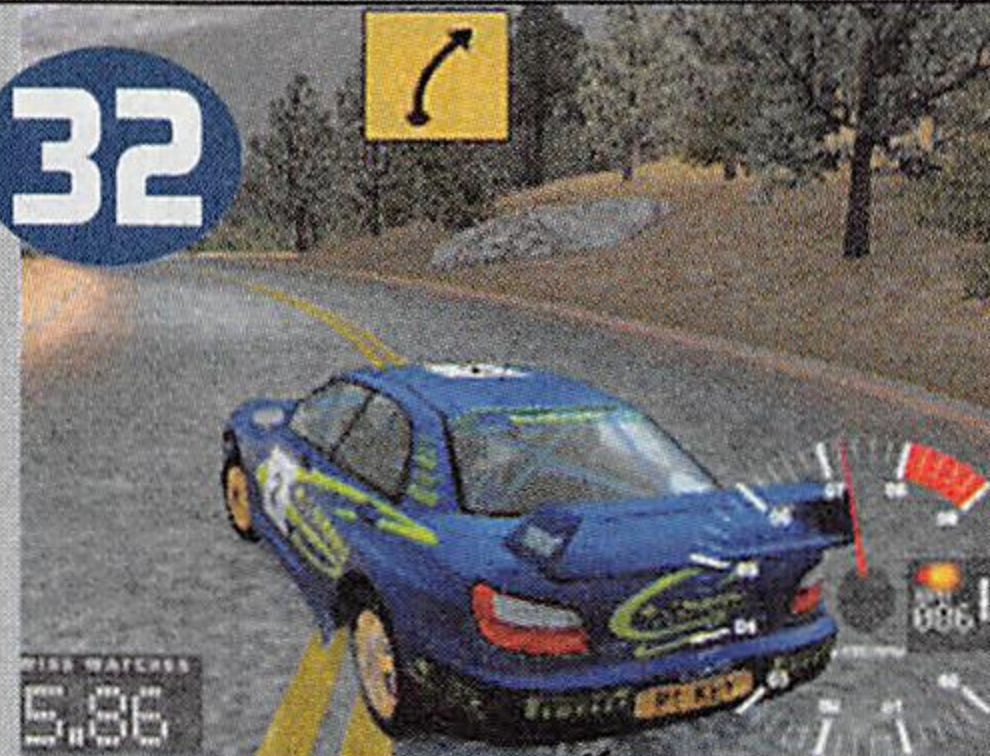
▲ AUTO MODELLISTA
Yeah, it looks real good, but...

30



▲ .hack//MUTATION
Can you hack into "The World?"

32



▲ COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3
Time to get sideways in the mud!

32



▲ MAGIC PENGEL
You draw it, then you fight it!

THE PSM MISSION STATEMENT

PSM is the magazine for the gaming elite—the hardcore gamers that support and drive this industry. This is *not* a "mass-market" magazine. We don't focus on "fun for the whole family," or waste space interviewing movie stars that have nothing to do with games. That's just not what we're into.

PSM is also proudly independent. We have no official corporate sponsor, so you can trust that our reviews and opinions will always be 100% our own. Our readers always come first, and we would never, ever betray your trust. This is our promise to you, the hardcore PlayStation 2 gamer, who deserves nothing less. Now let's get this issue going!

EXCLUSIVE

Shell-Shock!

The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles return to videogames, and PSM has the first look!

**ONLY IN
PSM
FIRST LOOK**

The heroes in a half-shell are jump-kicking their way back into the spotlight with a hot new TV series,

comic book, and action figure line-up. Most gamers, however,

remember the Ninja Turtles from Konami's popular arcade and console games—so it was only a matter of time before they busted their way into action the on PlayStation 2.

The new *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* reunites the mean, green fighting team in a cel-shaded, 3D beat-'em-up reminiscent of the original *TMNT* arcade game. The choice of genres is no coincidence, however, as producer Kengo Nakamura is

working alongside some of the same people responsible for the coin-op and its follow-ups.

Nakamura and Konami are also working very tightly with Mirage Studios, creators of the Turtles, to ensure that they capture the look, feel, and sound of the new TV series.

Set to debut at this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo, the game will enable one or two players to take control of their favorite turtle in a full Story mode, which, like previous turtle

games, will be tied into the storyline of the cartoon and comics. Unlike the earlier games, the turtles will each have their own unique fighting styles, special moves, and combos; Nakamura, who has worked on wrestling titles at Konami, is keen to deliver a lot more depth with this fighting engine. While the game may only be two player, it will be possible to call

PRESS START BUTTON!!

SCORE
000134

8

COMBO 5

4

▲ The Turtles' new, more mature look is a blend of the original Mirage comic book designs and those seen in the Archie Comics series.

◆ The action will be accompanied by action text on-screen, a la the old *Batman* TV show.

▼ Casey Jones and the Purple Dragons' leader are in VS Mode.



<< THE TURTLES WILL EACH HAVE THEIR OWN UNIQUE FIGHTING STYLES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND COMBOS >>



in all four turtles for special team attacks. Each level will also include hidden scrolls that teach the characters new moves and special abilities.

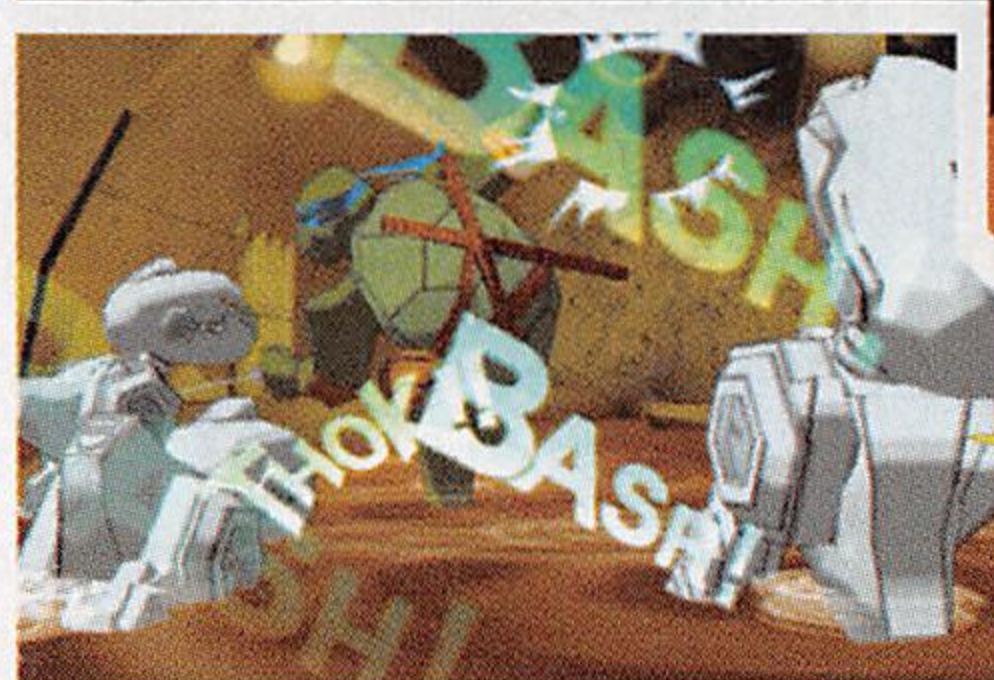
Enemies will include the familiar Foot Clan of crime-bent ninjas and their lethal leader, Shredder, but players will also get to square off against members of the Purple Dragon gang (introduced in the new

cartoon) and mechanical creations of mad scientist Baxter Stockman. The Turtles' mentor Splinter, vigilante Casey Jones, and lab tech April O'Neil will also make appearances, and we know that Jones will be selectable in the game's Versus Mode.

Shells polished and blades sharpened, the Ninja Turtles will hopefully make a big impact on PS2. We'll find out when the game comes out this fall.

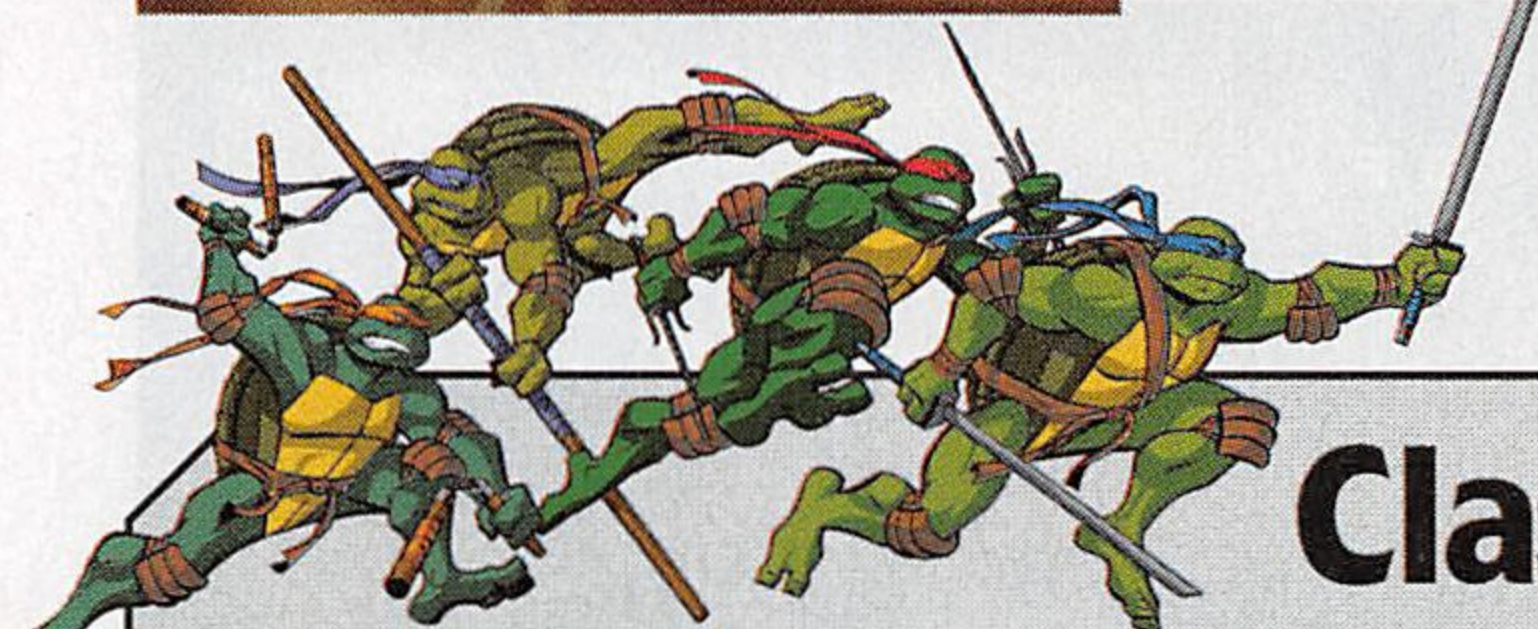


▲ The look of the game's city mimics that of the new TV show's perfectly, right down to the lighting and locations.



▶ Baxter Stockman's Mousers will attack in packs, making things difficult for the crew.

▶ Each turtle will make use of their weapons' unique traits.



Classic Turtle Action

The Ninja Turtles made their videogame debut on the 8-bit NES, but their most memorable appearance was in the original *TMNT* arcade game. The new game's versus mode will take cues from *TMNT Tournament Fighters*, seen on SNES and Genesis.



▲ Konami's classic *TMNT* "quarter muncher" was a fun, four-player brawler.



▲ *Tournament Fighters* played like *Street Fighter 2*, and was actually pretty good.

CREATOR Q&A

Kengo Nakamura, Producer, Konami CES



◀ Nakamura-san has worked on such classic Konami games as *Gradius*, *Contra*, and *Rush 'N Attack*. The mutant ninjas' new sensei graciously took some time away from his latest project to answer a few burning questions from the Turtle-lovin' PSM staff.

PSM: So, how long have you and your team been working on the new PS2 *TMNT* game?
Kengo Nakamura: We actually started developing the project about seven months ago.

PSM: Were any members of your current team involved in making the original *TMNT* games?
KN: Some guys from the old *TMNT* development team have joined us as advisers on the design of this game. They taught us the secrets of the success of the old *TMNT* games. For this new *TMNT*, we included these "secrets" and added new features.

PSM: How closely are you working with Mirage Studios (creators of *TMNT*) on the project?
KN: Mirage Studios was involved from the very first stages of development on the game. They gave us plenty of material: sketches, animation, and music, plus advice on the new *TMNT*. We are always talking with Mirage regarding the 3D character models, motions, colors, backgrounds, and many other aspects of the game.

PSM: Are the voice actors from the new *Ninja Turtles* animated series providing the voices of the game's characters?
KN: Yes, all the in-game voices are of the voice actors from the new *TMNT* series.

PSM: Can we expect any cinematic sequences in the story mode? If so, will they be produced by the animators of the new *TMNT* cartoon?
KN: Yes, we will have the animation from the *TMNT* series, plus we will have brand new animation that's being created exclusively for the game.

PSM: Will the versus mode be similar to a fighting game—like *TMNT Tournament Fighters*?
KN: It will be similar to *TMNT Tournament Fighters*, but it will also have recovery items and power-ups, and that makes it different from a pure fighting game.

PSM: Finally, if you could be any of the *TMNT* characters, who would you choose and why?
KN: I love all four, but if I dared to choose one, it'd be Michelangelo. I love him as practical joker, class clown type of guy.

NEWSFEED

>> UBI SOFT GOES APE

The folks who bring us *Rayman* have snatched up the rights to another platformer series, in the form of Sony's *Ape Escape 2*. The sequel to one of the best (and weirdest—you're going around catching monkeys, after all) PSone games ever has been in localization limbo for over a year, but is now set for a summer release here in the States, banana-scented boomerangs and all.

>> BACK TO BALDUR'S GATE

Interplay's Black Isle Studios is hard at work forging a sequel to the eye-popping action-RPG *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance*. Set to make its debut at E3 and land on shelves this winter, *Dark Alliance II* will incorporate a new item creation system and five original characters.

>> SEGA PLANS REDEMPTION

Headhunter: Redemption, that is. Bounty hunter Jack Wade returns from the original game, joined by a female apprentice named Leeza X. While Wade hunts criminals and races around on his motorcycle, Leeza uses her stealth skills to explore an underground prison system. Sega promises this one will be darker and more ambitious than the first. It's due out in the fall.



>> VECTORMAN'S NEW GENESIS

In other Sega news, the company is reviving *Vectorman*, an action hero first seen during the last days of the Sega Genesis. The new Vectorman game will be fully 3D and based around the concept of its morphing star being a veritable walking arsenal, with 15 weapons and 26 upgrades. Advanced AI and physics also promise to create a "living world," in Sega's words. We'll have a hands-on report from E3.

FIRST LOOK

RATCHET & CLANK 2

The interstellar action heroes blast back—with more guns, gadgets, and gorgeous graphics in tow

First came *Jak II*; now the curtain has been lifted—more like burned down

with a Pyrociter, in this case—on another of Sony's big E3 games. While it doesn't appear to be making the same degree of gameplay leap as Naughty Dog's *Jak and Daxter* sequel, *Ratchet & Clank 2* is still building on the original game (which was, you'd

have to agree, pretty darn maxed out to begin with).

The biggest addition to expect—apart from new planets, of course—is a weapon upgrade system, but Insomniac is also promising a load of new weapons and gadgets to play with, too. The characters themselves appear to have undergone a slight redesign (notice Ratchet's

spacesuit and more human-like proportions) and the graphics already display a lot more overall polish.

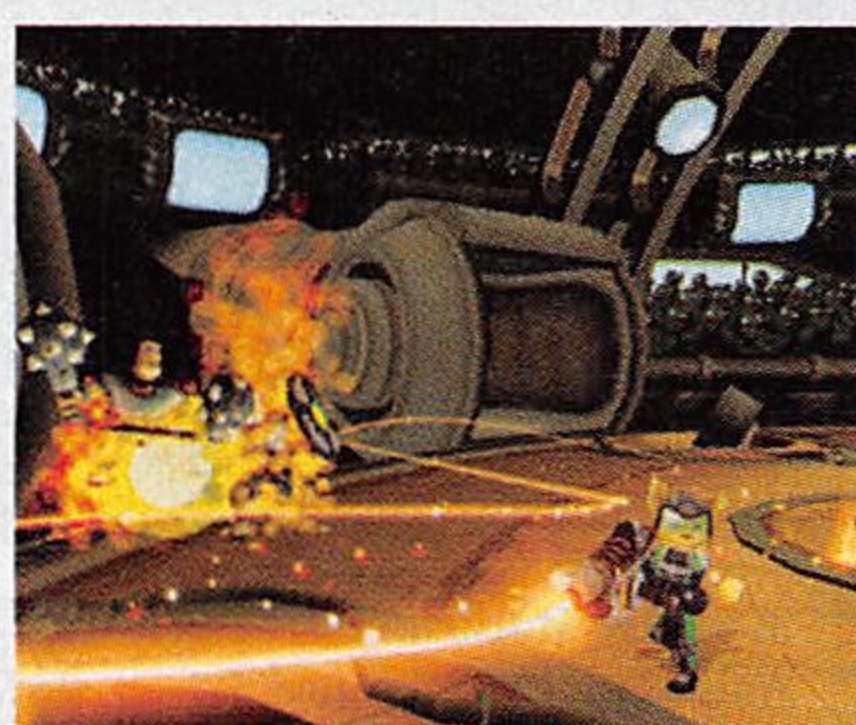
Ratchet & Clank 2 is set to launch this November and will be playable at E3. We'll have a full hands-on report in our August issue!



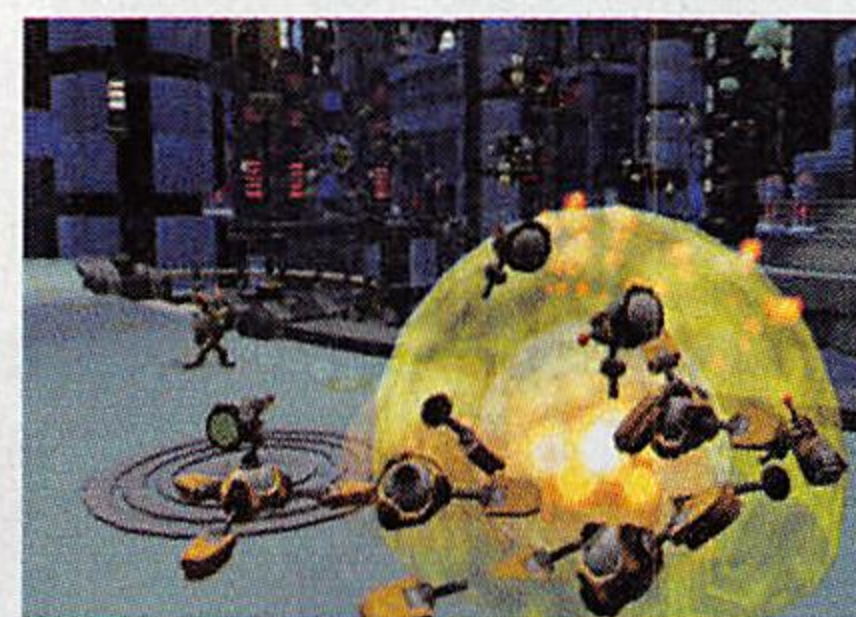
▲ Ratchet's not the only one with a new look—check out the intricate enemy models!



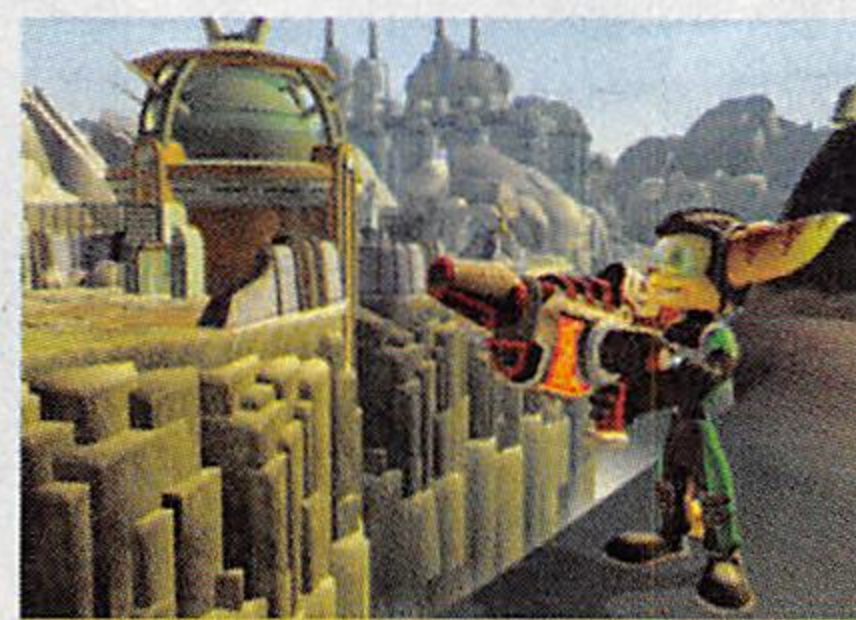
▲ The environments will be a lot more detailed this time around.



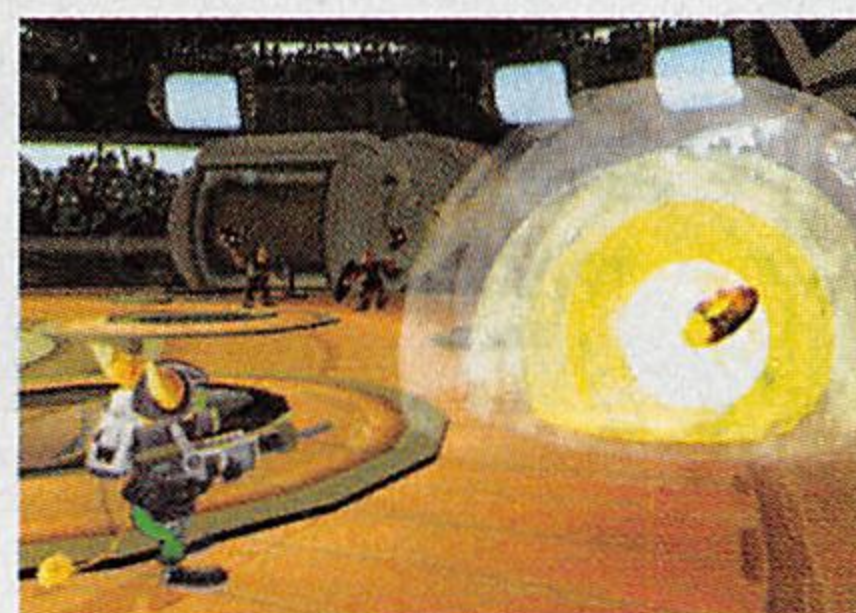
▲ New weapons will include this cool-looking "electro-whip."



▲ The new "ring laser" like weapon dismantles robotic enemies in a flash.



▲ Ratchet now dons a spacesuit, complete with helmet.



▲ Just as in the previous game, when stuff blows up, it blows up good.

TWO FROM TECMO

Fatal Frame 2 and *Monster Rancher 4* on the way

Both games will be officially unveiled at this year's E3 expo, but why wait for that when we can give you a first look at them right now? Expect to see them on shelves before year's end—expect more screens and info in our upcoming previews.

► More spooky snapshot-taking action awaits.



▲ Create your own monster and send it into battle.

FIRST LOOK

MAXIMO VS. THE ARMY OF ZIN

The best game no one played gets a sequel... and an unlikely playable character

You just can't keep a good game down—or from having a sequel, in this case. *Maximo* is a perfect example: despite being one of the best games in 2001, it didn't exactly set the sales charts ablaze. Thankfully, Capcom didn't take the usual "it didn't sell, can the sequel" route and is in fact producing one for release this year.

If you hadn't guessed from the title, *Maximo* is going up against a new foe, called Zin, and his army of motley badguys. The biggest addition to this sequel is a second playable character: the Grim Reaper. Yep, players will get to control ol' Death himself, though how he'll differ from Maximo—apart from his duds and scythe—remains to be seen. Few other details have been released so far, beyond the fact that there will be six new worlds (spanning 26 levels) and that Maximo's special moves won't be earned as in the first game—he'll have them all from the beginning. It also looks like he'll be taking on a lot more enemies at once during battle.

So there you have it, *Maximo* fans—the man is back this fall, and we'll have much more on the game soon.



▲ Maximo will square off against far more enemies simultaneously on this adventure than he did the last time out.



▲ New moves, such as this flaming spin slash, can be executed from the get-go.



▲ Playing as the Grim Reaper should be interesting, to say the least.

▲ The look of *Maximo Vs. The Army Of Zin* is still dark, but more detailed.

UNCOMMONTARY

WHY AM I SO ANGRY?

By RANDY NELSON



I'm usually a pretty laid back guy, but there's one thing I

simply can't stand: games that are obviously made just for the sake of making money. These usually end up being licensed games, whether they're based on movies, TV shows, comics... whatever. I know, I know—game companies are in business to make money, but this is a hobby that's all about having fun. And slapping a \$50 price tag on a game someone obviously spent little to no time on does not equal fun, no matter how big-name the license is. It could be *Playboy Bunny Extreme Trampoline Squad*, but I'd still be ticked if it played like crap.

Don't get me wrong: there are still plenty of good licensed games being made—but the mere existence of so-called "shovelware" is an affront to all things right in the world. It's the Kryptonite to my Superman; the water to my Wicked Witch of the West. In short, it sucks, and I want it to go away.

Imagine if other hobbies suffered from similar afflictions. Who would pay \$50 for an anime version of *Batman* that was drawn on Denny's napkins and shot in stop-motion, for example? I don't see any hands raised. But that's the equivalent of what we're handed with most crappy licensed games. When a company spends all its money on a license and none on making a good game, it's a disservice to fans and the license itself. The thought is that the license will sell the game, so there's no need to make it good or fun. Sad to say, enough people still shell out the money for these despicable discs that companies keep pumping them out and raking it in. Now you know why I'm so angry.

What can be done about it? What action can appease the mighty god of anger I become when I encounter one of these steaming loads? Not much, unfortunately. As long as there are licenses to be had, there will be bad licensed games. And as long as games are made, there will be shovelware. It's just an unwritten law of the universe, or something.

It may sound cliché, but our greatest weapon in the war against these ghastly games is our money—or rather our ability to not spend it on crap. So please, try before you buy, or at least make sure the store's got a good return policy. If we all work together, we can make gaming better, and maybe—just maybe—make me just a little less angry. Sound like a plan? —RANDY NELSON

FIRST LOOK

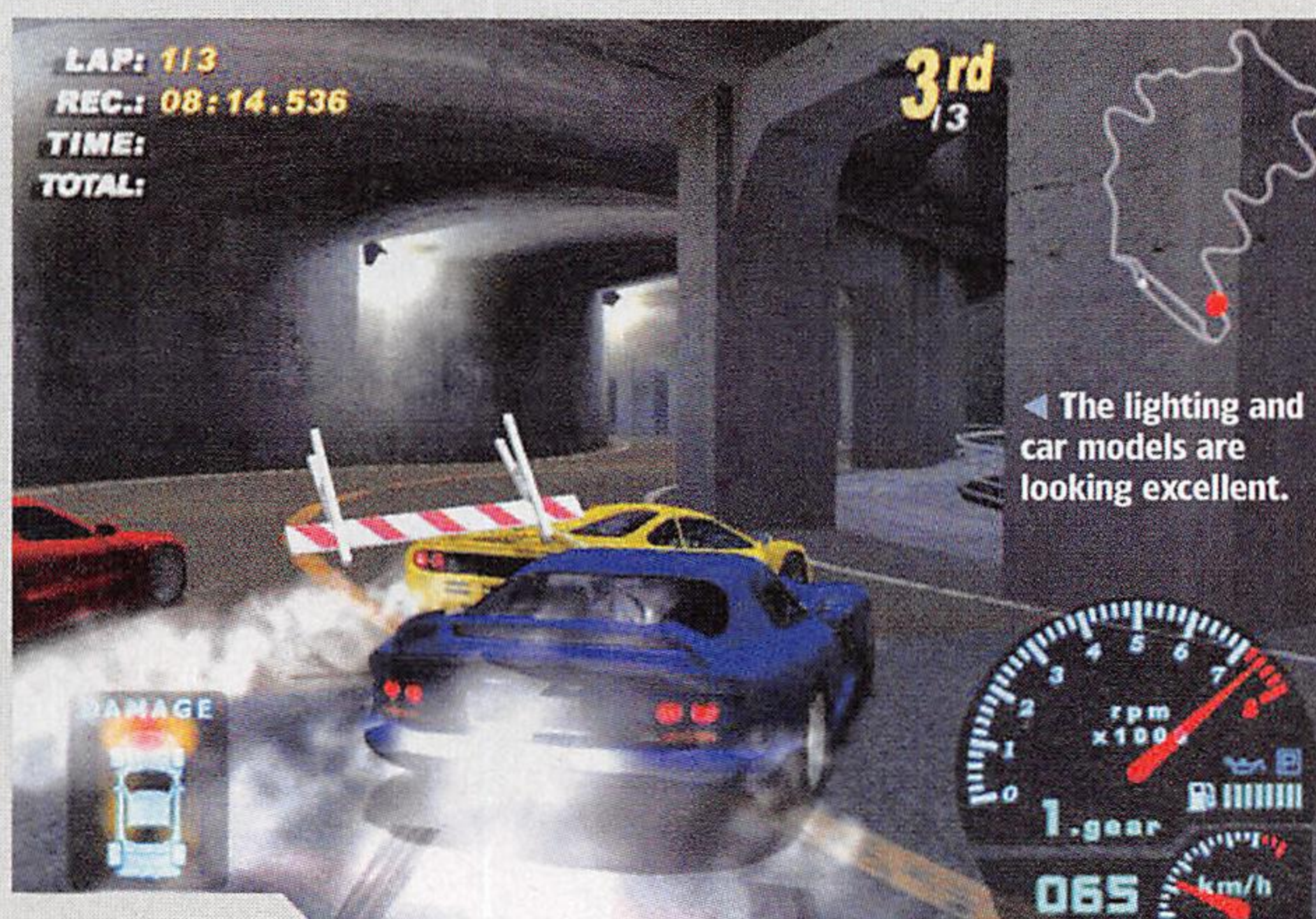
SONY'S RIDGE RACER KILLER?

Gran Turismo graphics + incredible wrecks = Axel Impact

You may have seen it mentioned in the pages of Monitor before: Sony Computer Entertainment's Korean-developed racing game project, now officially known as *Axel*

Impact. Screens from the most recent version of the game (which may be showcased at E3) show a stunning racer—one with original cars (a la *Ridge Racer*) and fantastic crashes that *Gran Turismo*

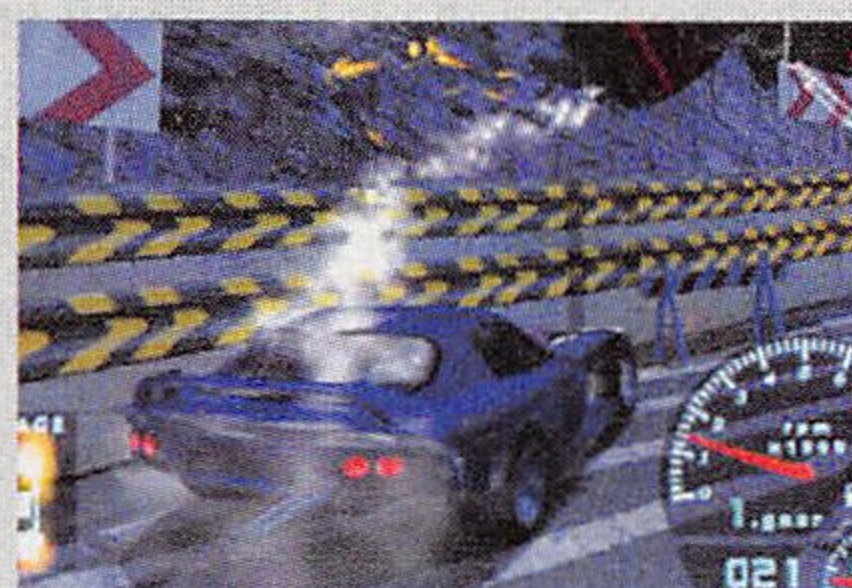
fans can only dream about. Here's hoping that it plays as good as it looks... and if it does, that Sony CEA brings it stateside, pronto!



▲ The lighting and car models are looking excellent.



▲ The physics promise to be far more realistic than in the *Ridge Racer* games.



▲ Check out that car careening off the wall—now that's what we call a wreck.

HITS & MISSES

What's *hot* and what's *not* in the gaming world today



ONLINE GAMES FINALLY FLOWING

Sony's network multiplayer strategy is finally getting some wind in its sails, thanks to like likes of recently released online compatible titles including *Amplitude*, *Auto Modellista*, and *Midnight Club II*. Sony is promising to release at least six online-ready games this year, including the already great looking *Syphon Filter: Omega Strain*, and third parties are finally starting to show decent support for the 'net.

YEAR ROUND GAMING

With the exception of the upcoming summer months, we've seen a pleasing off-shoot of PS2's huge mainstream success: game releases are being spread out more evenly throughout the year, not just right before Christmas. Big game releases, such as *ZOE2* and *Midnight Club 2* in March, are just two examples.



THE SOUL CALIBUR 2 WAITING GAME

Not to rub it in, but we've been playing the PS2 version of *Soul Calibur 2* in the office for quite some time (as have numerous import gamers). That still doesn't have us any less miffed about Stateside gamers having to wait five months after the game's Japanese release to get their hands on it en masse (and in English). Judging from the Japanese build, there's little translation required. Bring it on already!

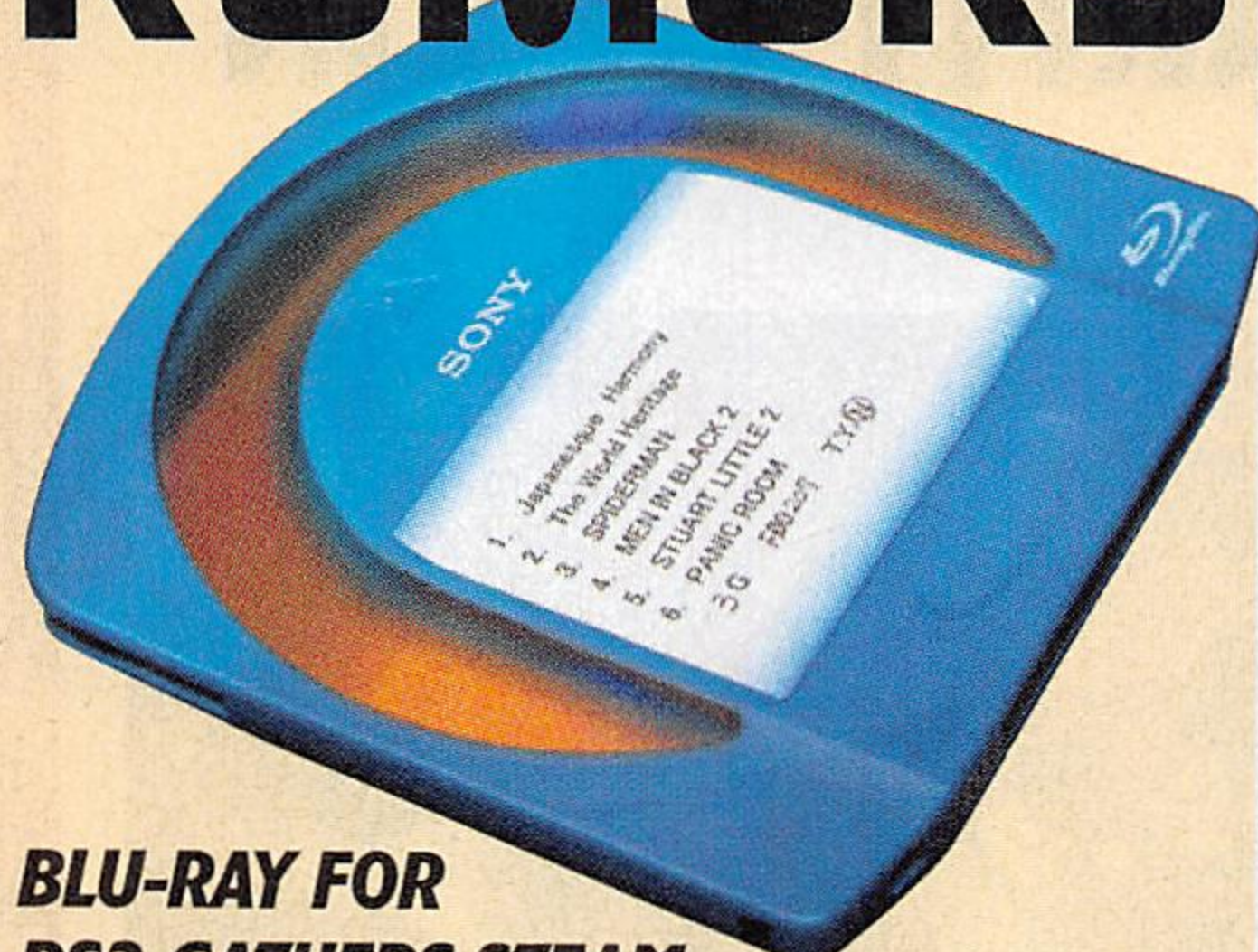
SUPER EASY GAMES



Luckily there aren't a lot of them, but a disturbing trend seems to be emerging: games that take little time or skill to beat. *Devil May Cry 2* is one of the biggest (and most

disappointing) examples, but the problem seems to be hitting genres across the board. Hopefully this isn't an unfortunate side effect of PS2's mainstream acceptance.

RUMORS



BLU-RAY FOR PS3 GATHERS STEAM

The chances for Sony's new massive recordable storage format making its way into the next PlayStation are starting to look a lot better. Why? One man: Ken Kutaragi. The father of PlayStation has recently been put in charge of Sony's Blue-Ray DVD technology push, though he'll still be running the show at Sony Computer Entertainment, a.k.a. PlayStation 2 HQ.

Our take: Seeing how well Kutaragi handled the PlayStation brand, Sony may just be seeking his talents in achieving a similar success for its fledgling storage format. However, it stands to reason that if Sony wants to get the format into as many homes as possible, it'll need a catalyst—and none could be bigger than PlayStation 3. Obviously this is all just conjecture at this point, but we'd be surprised if a tie between the two technologies isn't being looked at right now behind SCE's tightly closed doors. As an aside, the PlayStation 2 remains the world's best-selling DVD player, and did a lot to quickly broaden the DVD market in the wake of its release.

Probability: 55%

SHINOBI STRIKES AGAIN

Rumors circulating in the Japanese gaming press suggest that Sega's OverWorks studio is cranking away on a sequel to its PlayStation 2 revival of action classic *Shinobi*. Evidently, the team is going back to the drawing board, and the end result will play very differently from its predecessor. No time frame has been hinted at for the project's unveiling.

Our take: *Shinobi* on PS2 had a lot of potential—a great character and some interesting battle mechanics. Unfortunately, variety wasn't its strong suit. Hopefully, if OverWorks is truly developing a sequel, it will resolve that one major shortcoming. Better level design and more vertical gameplay wouldn't hurt, either.

Probability: 80%

ONIMUSHA 4?!

Just days after the unveiling of *Onimusha 3*, where it was disclosed that it will be the last game in the series—creating a true trilogy—word has come out of Japan that a fourth game in the series is being considered... and it's not *Onimusha: Buraiden*.

Our take: We talked to Capcom just a few days before this rumor surfaced, and they stressed that series creator Keiji Inafune is fully intent on making part three the final installment in the samurai saga. We're not about to second guess Inafune-san, so we can only imagine that this other title—if real—is another *Buraiden*-style offshoot... potentially a strategy game? Only time will tell.

Probability: 75%

FIRST INFO

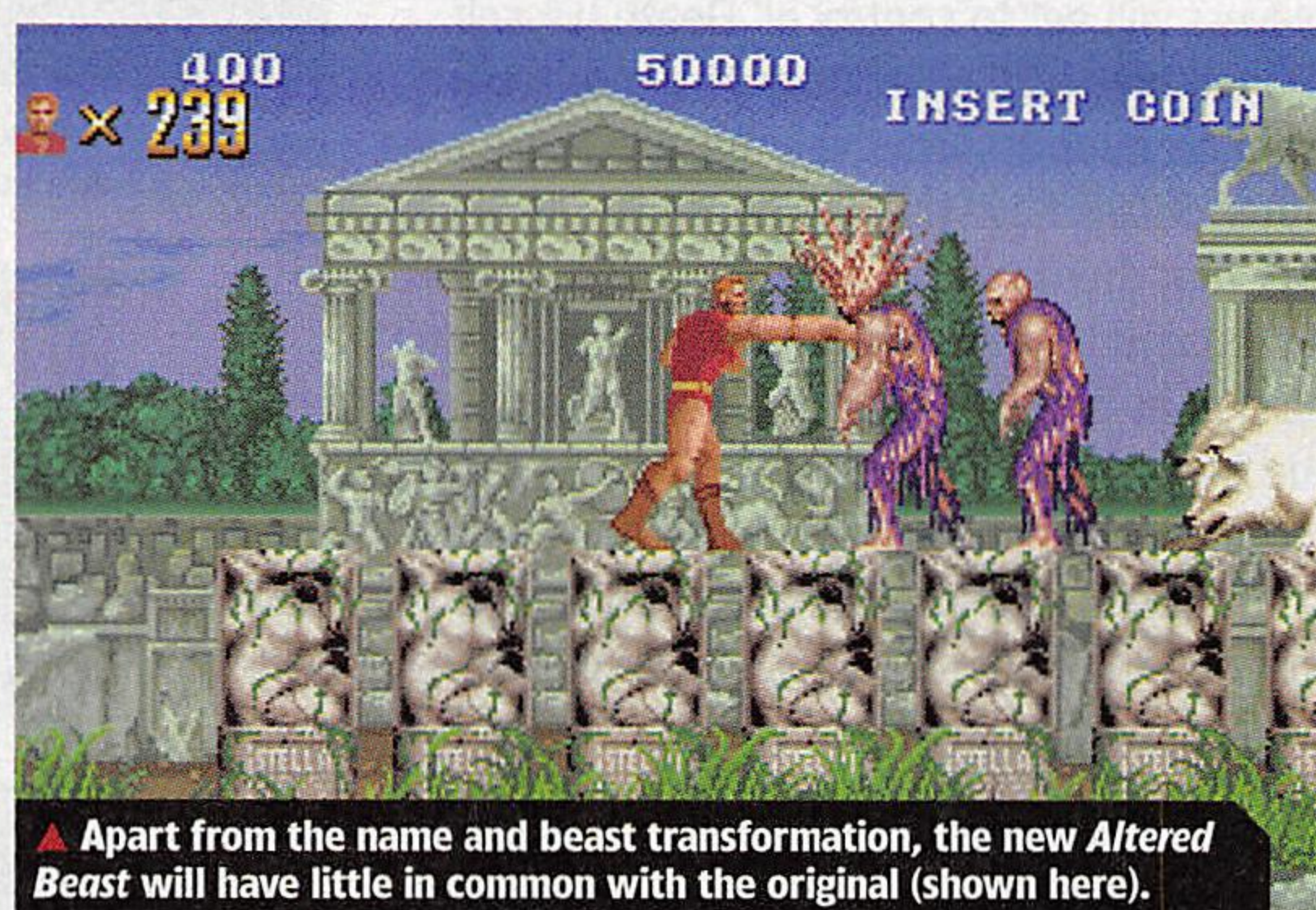
RISE FROM YOUR GRAVE!

Arcade classic Altered Beast is resurrected—but you might not recognize it

Packed-in with the Sega Genesis system, the original *Altered Beast*—based on a smash arcade game—was set in ancient Greece and hinged on a unique play mechanic: by collecting orbs, players could morph their characters from man to beast. Now after more than a decade, the game is returning on PS2—and while the beast transformation element is still there, pretty much everything else is changing.

Instead of a warrior of the gods, players will control a covert operative sent to investigate a deadly genetic outbreak (what's with all these genetic outbreaks these days?). Through six levels, you'll be able to manipulate the character's genetics to transform into eight creatures, including the classic werewolf and dragon, but also new beasts, including a minotaur.

Altered Beast is being developed by WOW Entertainment (*House of the Dead*) for a fall release and will debut at E3.



▲ Apart from the name and beast transformation, the new *Altered Beast* will have little in common with the original (shown here).

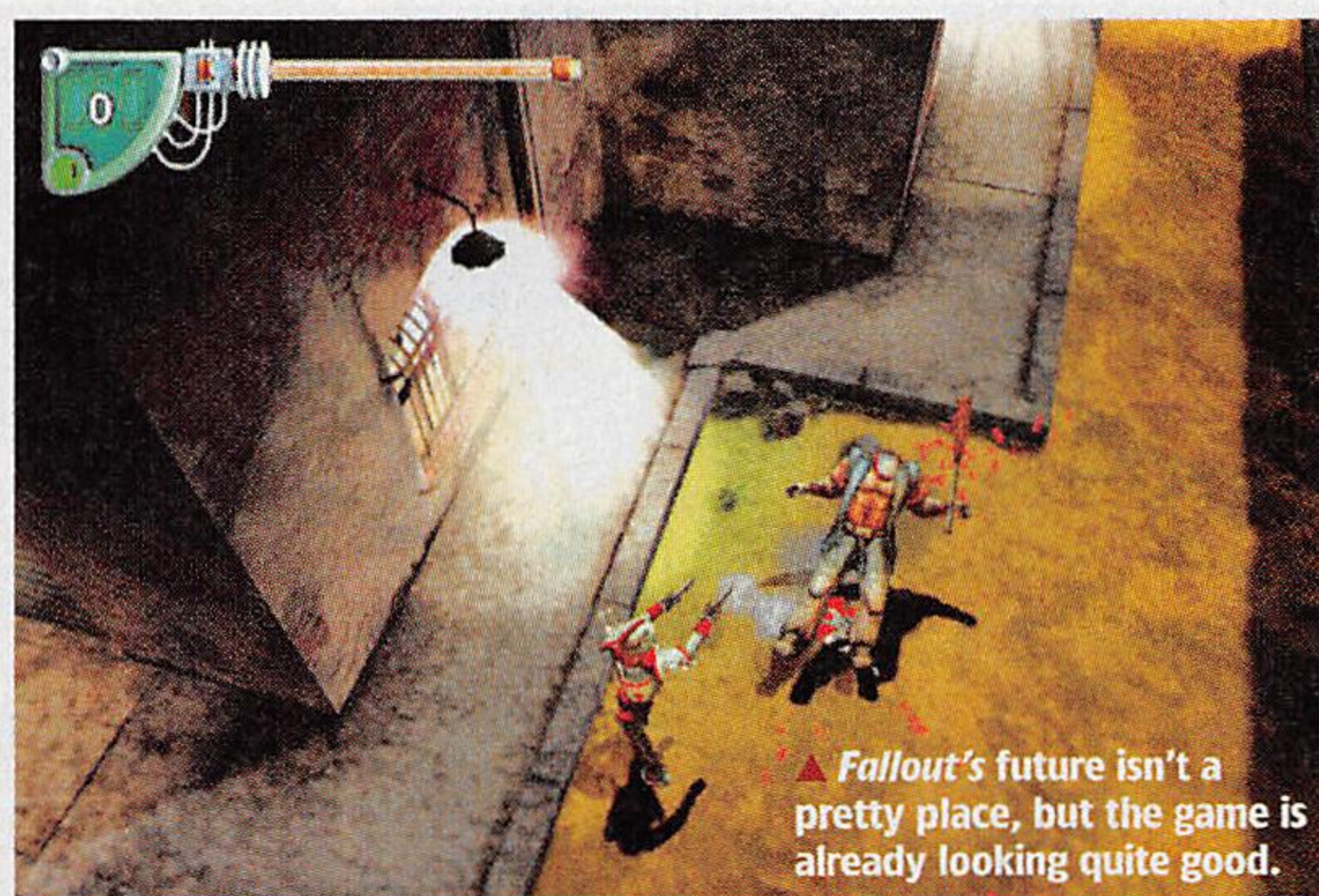
FIRST LOOK

FALLOUT HITS PS2

The PC's post-apocalyptic RPG hit gets console-ized

The planet is a nuclear wasteland and most of humanity is waiting out the fallout in underground installations called Vaults—except for your character, who ventures out into the barbaric *Mad Max* style world that's emerged above. That's the setup for *Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel*, Interplay's new third-person action-adventure due out this fall.

Players will be able to choose from three characters, each of which will have a high degree of attribute customization. Unlike the PC games, combat will be in real time, with the aid of an auto lock-on. There will be more than 50 weapons, from machine guns to vibra-blades, for cutting down radioactive mutants and other foes. If the PC games are anything to go by, players can also expect a darkly humorous storyline to complement all the shooting.



▲ *Fallout's* future isn't a pretty place, but the game is already looking quite good.

MACE GRIFFIN

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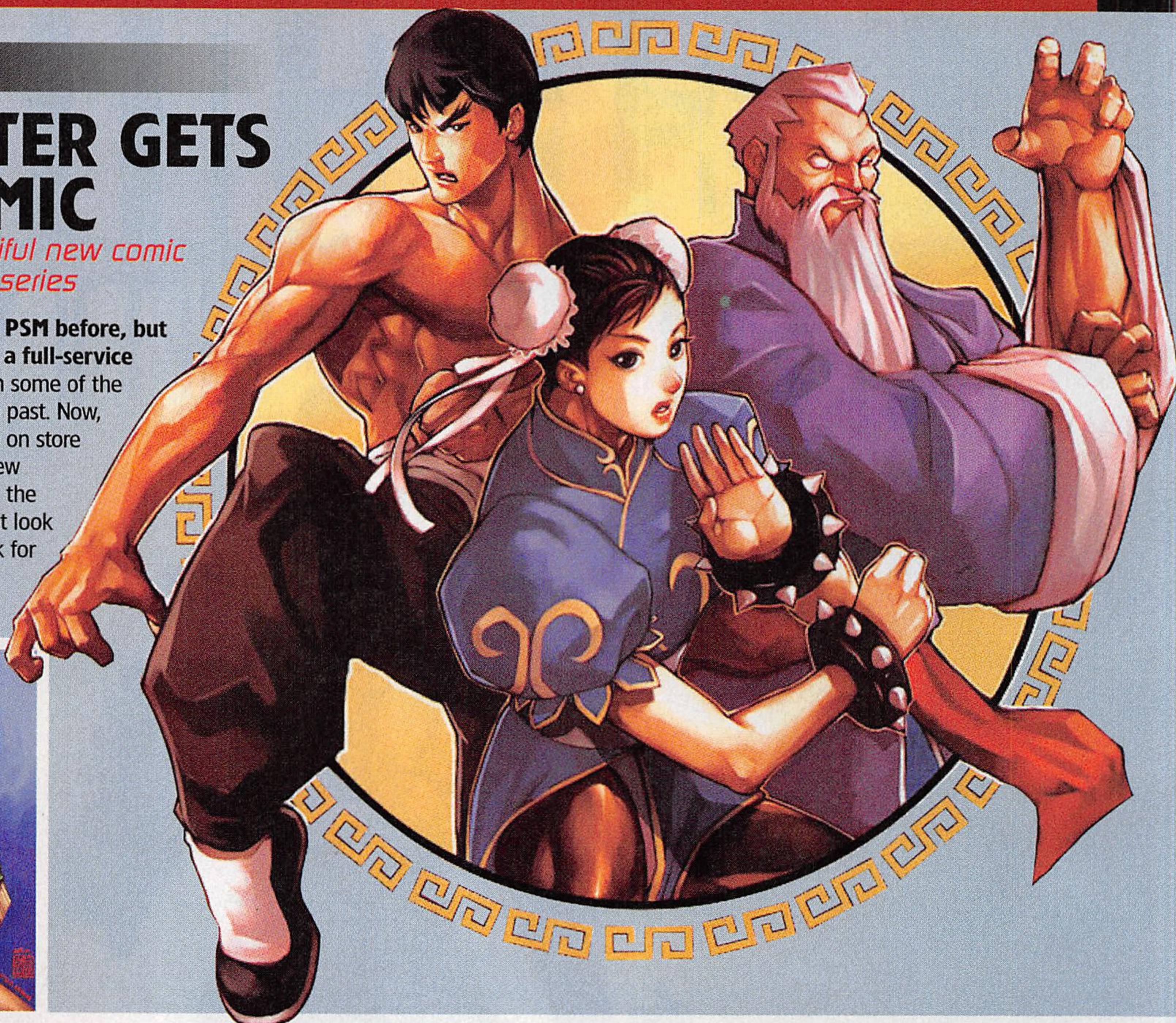
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FIRST LOOK

STREET FIGHTER GETS KICK-ASS COMIC

Udon sets to work on a beautiful new comic based on the famous fighting series

You've seen their work in the pages of PSM before, but you might not have known it. Udon is a full-service comic group that has done coloring work on some of the illustrations used throughout our mag in the past. Now, with titles such as *Robotech* from Wildstorm on store shelves, the studio is setting to work on a new ongoing *Street Fighter* comic featuring all of the series' most popular characters. Here's a first look at the amazing art Udon is cooking up. Look for the first issue in September from Image Comics at your local comic shop!



VERSUS MODE

**VOLDO
VS
VOLVO**



ROUND ONE: Background

Voldo: Freakishly dressed Soul/Calibur fighter known to be deadly

Volvo: Conservative line of family cars known for their safety

Advantage: Voldo

Voldo: Origin unknown, but presumably an ex-circus freak

Volvo: Made in Sweden, land of statuesque blondes

Advantage: Volvo

ROUND TWO: In Action

Voldo: Uses multiple sharp-edged blades to slice opponents

Volvo: Uses dull, box-like body and frame to protect passengers

Advantage: Voldo

Voldo: Almost looks like he's wearing a bunch of seatbelts

Volvo: Features a plenty of seatbelts and supplemental airbags

Advantage: Volvo

ROUND THREE: Bonus Round

Voldo: Usually seen driving around the red light district

Volvo: Usually seen driving around the suburbs

Advantage: Voldo

Voldo: Ideal match would be a whip wielding "mistress"

Volvo: Ideal match would be a grocery toting soccer mom

Advantage: Voldo

WINNER: VOLDO!

GAME GOODS

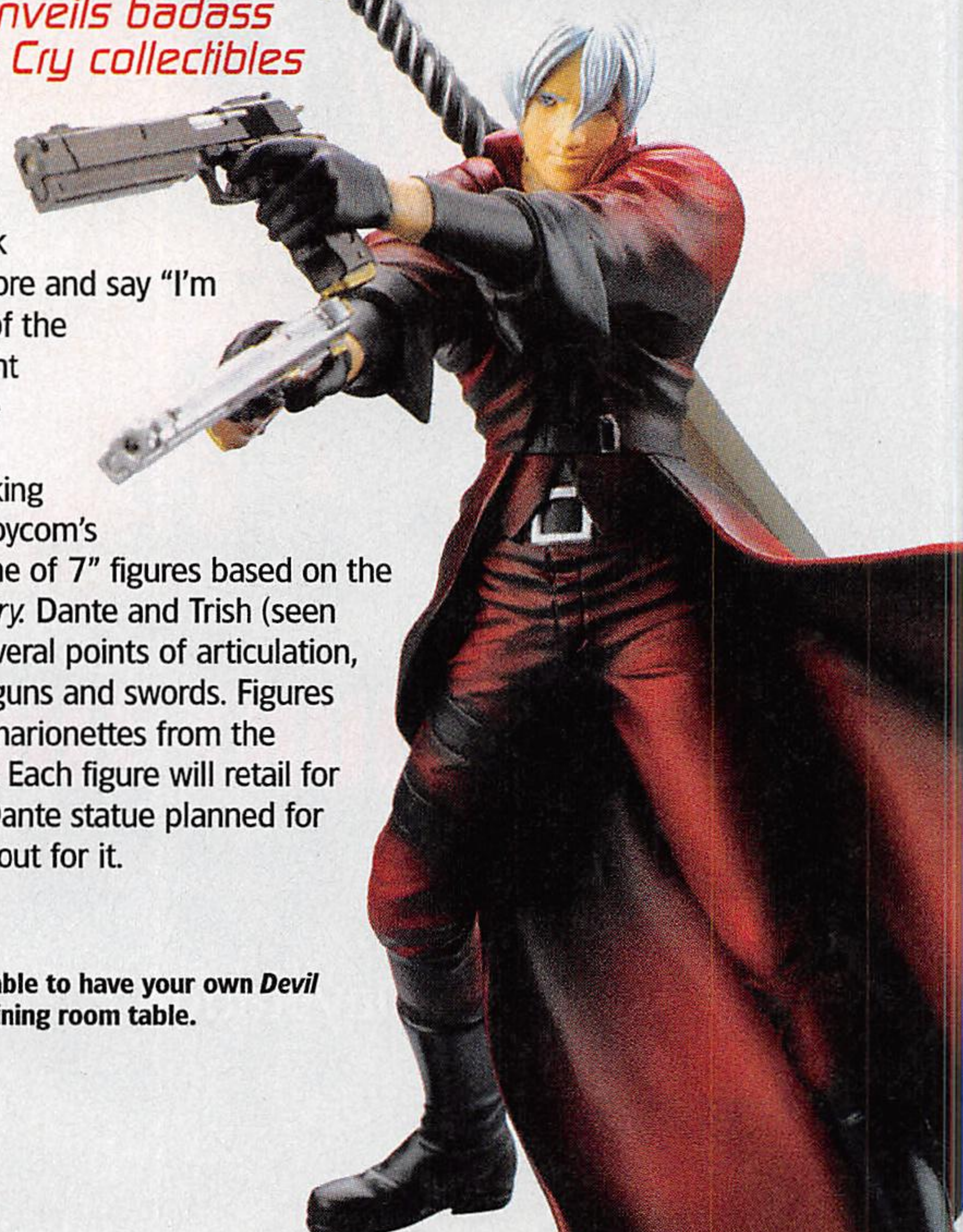
DEVILISHLY COOL FIGURES

Toycom unveils badass Devil May Cry collectibles



Early this summer,

you'll be able to walk into your local toy store and say "I'm looking for the son of the legendary dark knight Sparda." Okay, so the clerk probably won't know what you're talking about, but you will: Toycom's impressive-looking line of 7" figures based on the original *Devil May Cry*. Dante and Trish (seen here) feature several points of articulation, plus removable guns and swords. Figures based on the demonic marionettes from the game are also planned. Each figure will retail for \$9.99 each. Toycom also has a Dante statue planned for release this year, so keep an eye out for it.



▶▶ It won't be long before you'll be able to have your own *Devil May Cry* adventures on your desk or dining room table.

NOT ALL WEAPONS ARE CREATED EQUAL

**"Jessica Alba is kicking
butt and taking names."**
-New York Post



**THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON
AVAILABLE NOW ON DVD**



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CHECKPOINT

This is your one-stop spot to get a handle on the best stuff headed our way
(Please keep in mind that release dates are always subject to change)

Current Releases

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Arc The Lad: Twilight of the Spirits	RPG	Sony CEA
Big Mutha Truckers	Action	Empire
Dungeons & Dragons: Heroes	Action	Infogrames
Evil Dead: Fist Full of Boomstick	Action	THQ
The Hulk	Action	Universal Interactive
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter	Action	Crave
Street Racing Syndicate	Racing	3DO
RTX Red Rock	Action	LucasArts
Space Channel 5	Action	Agetec
Summer Heat Beach Volleyball	Sports	Acclaim
SX Superstar	Racing	Acclaim
Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness	Action	Eidos

July's Releases

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Ape Escape 2	Action	Ubi Soft
Armored Core: Silent Line	Action	Agetec
Daredevil	Action	Encore
Downhill Domination	Sports	Sony CEA
Freaky Flyers	Racing	Midway
Fugitive Hunter	Action	Infogrames
Jacked	Racing	3DO
Robocop	Action	Titus
Space Channel 5 Part 2	Action	Agetec
Splashdown 2	Racing	THQ
Unlimited SaGa	RPG	Square

August's Releases

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Gladius	Action	LucasArts
.hack: Outbreak	RPG	Bandai
Hunter The Reckoning—Wayward	Action	Vivendi
The Lost	Adventure	Crave
Pitfall Harry	Action	Activision
RPG Maker 2	RPG	Agetec
Silent Hill 3	Action	Konami
Starsky & Hutch	Action	Empire
Soul Calibur II	Fighting	Namco

September's Releases

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Celebrity Death Match	Fighting	Take 2
Fear Effect Inferno	Action	Eidos
Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb	Action	LucasArts
Jeopardy! 2003	Misc.	Infogrames
Kengo 2: Legacy of the Blade	Fighting	Ubi Soft
Risk	Strategy	Infogrames
Star Ocean 3: Till the End of Time	RPG	Square Enix
Star Trek: Shattered Universe	Action	TDK Mediactive
True Crime: Streets of L.A.	Action	Activision
Wheel of Fortune 2003	Misc.	Infogrames

► Indy's back, in a new mysterious adventure!



PSM Big Game Tracker



Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness

Pub: Eidos Type: Adventure Release Date: Summer

Where's Lara? Truth be told, even as of this writing, we haven't gotten our hands on a cohesive version of her latest adventure. The team at Core Design is cranking away, but certainly doesn't want to rush the game out, hence the nebulous release date. May is looking iffy, with a June release seeming more probable.

SSX 3

Pub: EA Sports BIG Type: Racing Release Date: Fall

It's definitely on the way, and before the end of the year, no less. The EA Canada crew is being understandably tight-lipped about this one; all they'll confirm is that some radical (or "totally radical," if you prefer) changes are being made to the series for its third run—this won't be a *Tricky*-esque upgrade. Expect a BIG (pun intended) E3 debut for this one.



Fear Effect: Inferno

Pub: Eidos Type: Action Release Date: TBA

We've got your first-ever look at the latest *Fear Effect* this issue (on page 74, in fact)—but what's taking it so long? Here's the scoop: the gameplay has been in a state of flux. As it stands, it's a lot more action-oriented than the past games, but its creators are trying to find the proper balance between fighting and puzzles.

Grand Theft Auto "San Andreas"

Pub: Rockstar Type: Action Release Date: 2004

As of last check, the chances for the next *GTA* game running on the *GTA3* engine coming this year still look slim. The crew at Rockstar North is dividing its time between this, a bit of *GTA4*, and its "*Manhunt*" project—that last one's the game we're mostly likely to see from them this year. As for the yet-untitled *Vice City* follow-up, we predict a spring 2004 launch.



◀ Don't freak out—we made up this art ourselves.



Gran Turismo 4

Pub: Sony CEA Type: Racing Release Date: TBA

This one's a shoe-in to make its debut on the first day of E3 in some form. Creator Kazunori Yamauchi has been dropping small details lately, including the fact that the simulation model will be beyond anything anyone's seen in a racer before, and that car damage is still a possibility. Not much, but exciting nonetheless.

WHAT YOU SHOULD BE PLAYING



1. Zone of the Enders: The 2nd Runner

Publisher: Konami Developer: Konami Type: Action

This is truly one of the "new classics" on PS2. Intense action, excellent bosses, a solid storyline, and plenty of bonus missions make this a definite must-have.



2. Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell

Publisher: Ubi Soft Developer: Red Storm Type: Action

No other game—not even *Metal Gear*—has managed to make you feel like a badass covert operative the way *Splinter Cell* does. Plus, it just looks amazing!



3. Dark Cloud 2

Publisher: Sony CEA Developer: Level 5 Type: RPG

This gorgeous action-RPG is packed with variety, a great story, and absolutely loads of stuff to do.

Cool Stuff

Here's a look at some of the hottest new gear and goodies you should keep an eye out for

THE MATRIX PHONE

From: Samsung
Price: \$TBA
Available: May 15

The Matrix: Reloaded will be everywhere come May 15—even at cellphone stores. Produced by Samsung, *The Matrix Phone* will look just like the ones used by the stars of the movie. Its coolest feature by far is the screen cover, which slides up automatically when you press a button on the side of the phone. The phone will also feature a 65,000+ color LCD screen and the ability to store 40 polyphonic ringtones. Sadly, Carrie Anne Moss's phone number does not come preprogrammed into the phone's directory.

► Part *Star Trek* communicator, part tazer, all cool: *The Matrix Phone*.



Readers' Most Wanted

1 FINAL FANTASY X-2

Publisher: Square
Developer: Square
Release Date: TBA

NEW

900 votes

Most of PSM's readers agree: hotpants rule! (They want FFX-2, too.)



2 ENTER THE MATRIX

Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Shiny
Release Date: May 15

NEW

373 votes

The hottest movie of the year... one of the hottest games. Coincidence?



3 FINAL FANTASY XI

Publisher: Square
Developer: Square
Release Date: TBA

NEW

279 votes

FF fans are clearly ready to head online. Hope for word on U.S. plans soon.



4 DRIVER 3

Publisher: Infogrames Developer: Reflections
Release Date: TBA 2004

NEW

252 votes

5 RESIDENT EVIL ONLINE

Publisher: Capcom Developer: Capcom
Release Date: TBA 2004

NEW

230 votes

6 TOMB RAIDER: TAOD

Publisher: Eidos Developer: Core Design
Release Date: Summer

NEW

222 votes

7 SOUL CALIBUR II

Publisher: Namco Developer: Namco
Release Date: August

NEW

200 votes

8 SILENT HILL 3

Publisher: Konami Developer: Konami
Release Date: August

NEW

155 votes

9 STAR CRAFT: GHOST

Publisher: Vivendi Developer: Blizzard
Release Date: Fall

NEW

111 votes

10 STAR OCEAN 3

Publisher: Square Enix Developer: Tri-Ace
Release Date: Fall

NEW

93 votes

CAST YOUR VOTE!

Visit www.psonline.com and pick your most wanted game from our list of the hottest upcoming releases. We'll tally the results, and print 'em here each issue!

Hot In June

TOP FIVE DVD RELEASES



OUR TOP PICK:

THE ANIMATRIX
06/03/03

This collection of nine animated shorts by some of the best anime creators on the planet is a must-have. Not only are the shorts great, but they explain a lot of *Matrix* backstory, too.

2. *Ninja Scroll: 10th Anniversary Edition* 06/24/03

Wow—has it really been 10 years? Set in samurai-era Japan, one of the best (and bloodiest) anime films ever gets special treatment.

3. *Die Another Day* 06/23/03

The latest Bond flick goes to disc with special features including multi-angle looks at special effects, a "making of" documentary, and more.

4. *Miracle Mile* 06/03/03

This cult '80s movie has been hard to find for years. Anthony Edwards (*ER*) gets a random call that could be a hoax—or mean nuclear war.

5. *Deep Space Nine: The Complete Third Season* 06/03/03

Nothing can ever match up to *The Next Generation*, but in its later seasons, *Deep Space Nine* became a damn good *Star Trek* series.

TOP FIVE NEW MOVIES



OUR TOP PICK:

THE HULK
06/03/03

The biggest, greenest movie of the summer is finally here. Hopefully Ang Lee can deliver the mother of all comic book movies—a real *smash*, if you will (har-har).

2. *Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle* 06/27/03

Let's see... lots of action, cool special effects, and three of the hottest gals in Hollywood in tight clothes? One adult admission, please.

3. *2 Fast 2 Furious* 06/06/03

Vin Diesel is out, but this street racing sequel flick still shows promise. Shaft director John Singleton is behind the wheel of this one.

4. *When Harry Met Lloyd: Dumb and Dumberer* 06/06/03

Yes, we know, "dumberer" is not a word. But this really is a movie—a prequel to the silly Farrelly brothers flick set in the '80s.

5. *Hollywood Homicide* 06/13/03

Harrison Ford returns to the silver screen playing a detective trying to figure out who offed a popular—and controversial—rap group.

NPD Funworld TRSTS

SALES CHARTS

TOP 10 PS2 GAMES FOR FEBRUARY

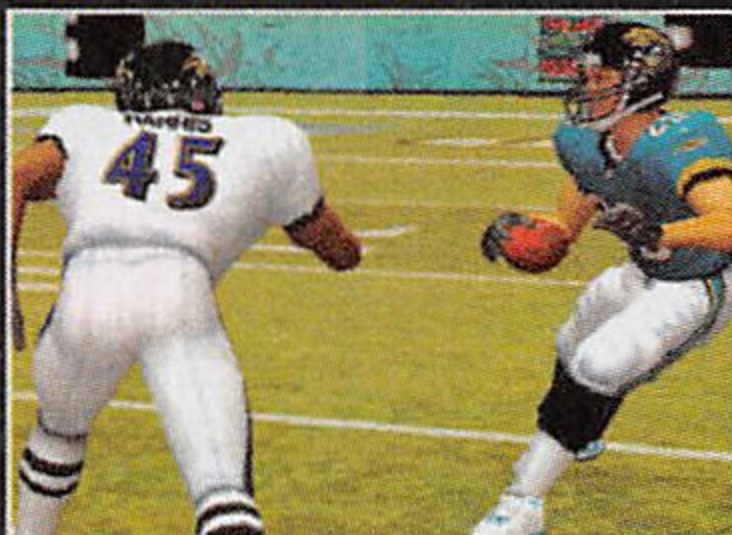
1. *The Getaway*



2. *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*
3. *The Sims*
4. *Yu-Gi-Oh! Duelist of Roses*
5. *Devil May Cry 2*
6. *Xenosaga*
7. *.hack//Infection*
8. *ATV Offroad Fury 2*
9. *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai*
10. *Madden NFL 2003*

SPORTS TOP 10 FOR FEBRUARY

1. *Madden NFL 2003*



2. *NBA Live 2003*
3. *NBA Street*
4. *Tiger Woods PGA 2003*
5. *Big Game Hunter*
6. *NCAA March Madness 2003*
7. *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3*
8. *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4*
9. *NBA 2K3*
10. *NFL 2K3*

OVERALL TOP 10 FOR FEBRUARY

1. *The Getaway (PS2)*



2. *GTA: Vice City (PS2)*
3. *The Sims (PS2)*
4. *Yu-Gi-Oh! Duelist / Roses (PS2)*
5. *Devil May Cry 2 (PS2)*
6. *Xenosaga (PS2)*
7. *Yu-Gi-Oh! Dungeon Dice (GBA)*
8. *.hack//Infection (PS2)*
9. *ATV Offroad Fury 2 (PS2)*
10. *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai (PS2)*

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28 Auto Modellista



32 Colin McRae Rally 3



30 .hack//Mutation

32 Indycar Series



32 Magic Pengel

24 Midnight Club II

SCORING

- 10 CLASSIC**
A rare gem; Our highest recommendation
- 9 OUTSTANDING**
One of the better games this year
- 8 VERY GOOD**
You can't go wrong
- 7 GOOD**
A solid game
- 6 OKAY**
Kind of fun, but no big deal
- 5 SO-SO**
You've got to love the subject matter
- 4 LACKING**
Big flaws really hurt this game
- 3 BAD**
Not fun at all
- 2 AWFUL**
This game is an insult
- 1 WHY?**
Why would anyone do this to us?

We take our reviews very seriously. We spend hours upon hours playtesting each title so that we can give you the absolute best information to help you buy.

Games that score an 8, 9 or 10 earn a Bronze, Silver or Gold **PSM Must-Buy Award**. We don't hand these beauties out easily, so if you see one on a review, a game box or advertising, you'll want to be sure to check that game out.

Finally, when looking up past scores, keep in mind that older games usually wouldn't fare as well if they were reviewed today.

MIDNIGHT

ONLINE TRAFFIC CRIMES

Midnight Club II's online mode offers nearly unlimited replay value, thanks in part to its cool play modes and ability to customize race conditions.

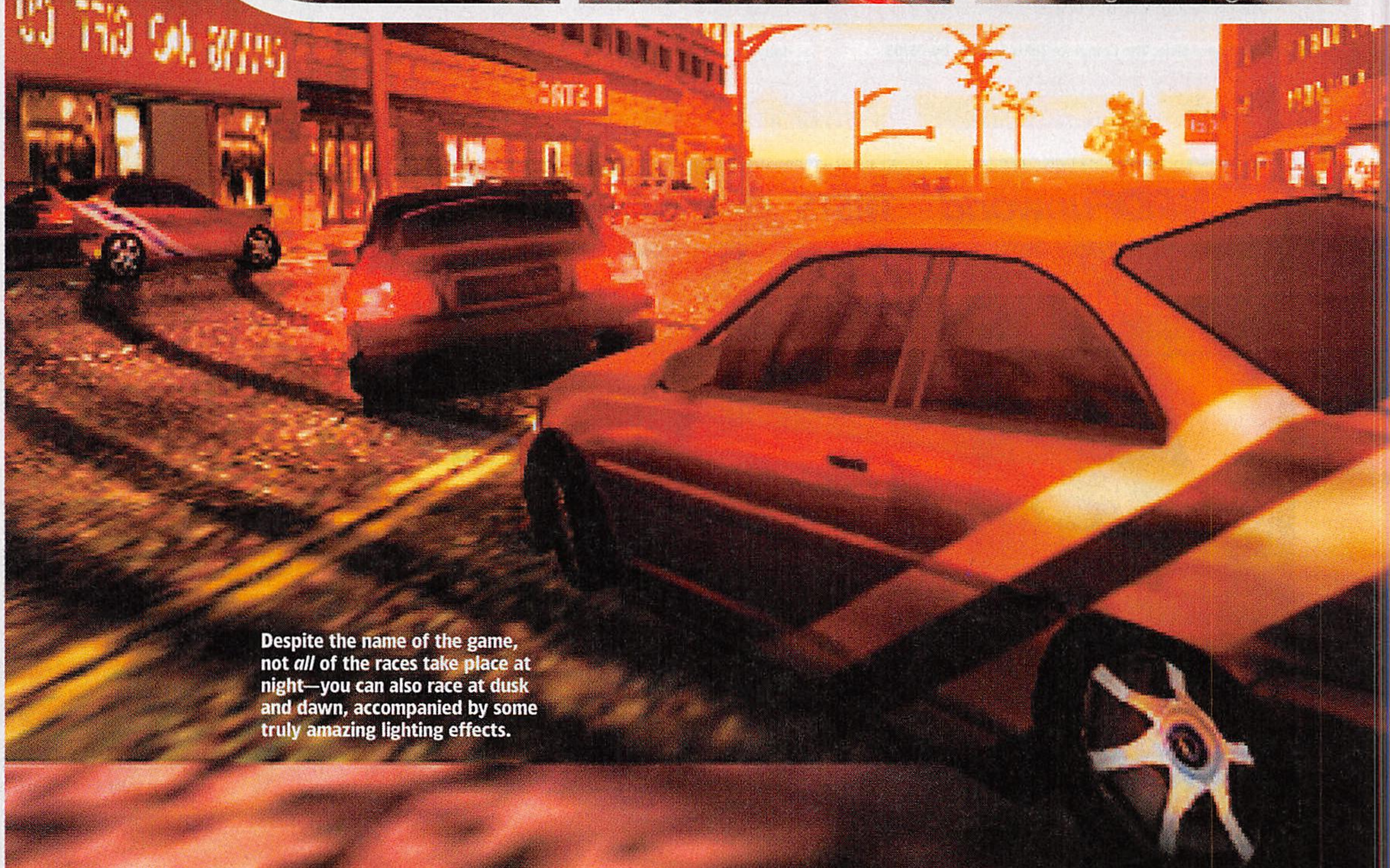
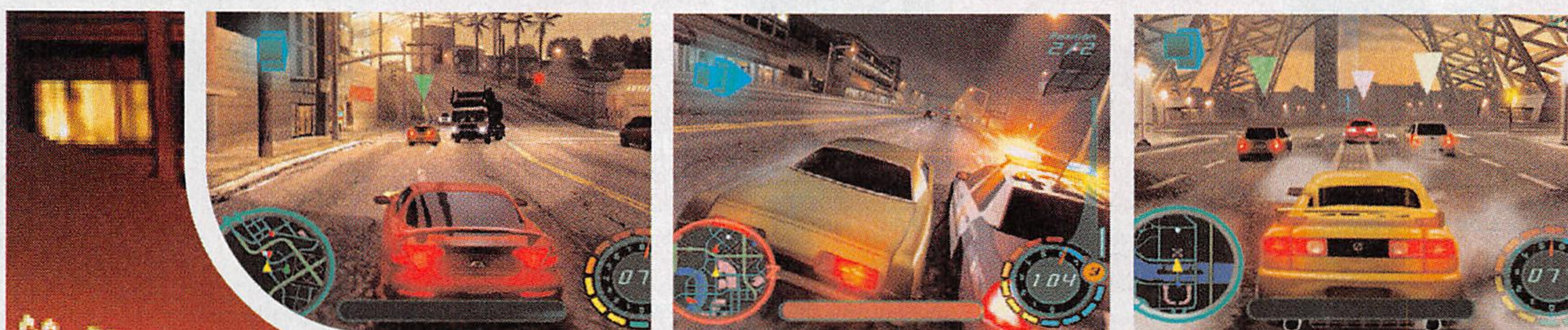


▲ Capture the Flag is just one of the several fun multiplayer online game types.

▲ Power-ups can also be thrown into the mix, making for an even more thrilling experience.

Or as we like to call it:

Once in a while, a game comes along that rattles its genre so much, it almost creates a new one. Such is the case with *Midnight Club II*, a city-based racing game similar in some ways to others that have come before it, but totally unlike any arcade racer you've ever experienced.



Despite the name of the game, not *all* of the races take place at night—you can also race at dusk and dawn, accompanied by some truly amazing lighting effects.



<< TOTALLY UNLIKE ANY ARCADE
RACER YOU'VE EVER EXPERIENCED >>

GAME INFO / PUB ROCKSTAR | DEV ROCKSTAR SAN DIEGO | TYPE RACING | MAX PLAYERS EIGHT (ONLINE) | ESRB RATING TEEN

CLUB II

"Grand Theft Turismo"

Like the first game, *MCII* centers on illegal street racing in sprawling city environments—Los Angeles, Paris, and Tokyo in this case—with players being given the freedom to make their own paths and shortcuts through each bustling metropolis to the finish line. That's pretty much where the similarities between the two games end, though. *MCII* makes so many improvements over its predecessor that it's tough to list them all—let's just say that nearly every aspect of the game has been improved, plus a whole slew of new ideas have been implemented to make it even better.

PSM
GAME
OF THE
MONTH

ONLINE
COMPATIBLE

PSM
MUST-BUY
GOLD

◀ The game is packed with cool characters that add a lot of personality and flair to make the racing even more exciting.



■ Behind the Wheel

The first and most obvious leap *MCII* makes over the first game is in the gameplay department. The handling of this game's numerous cars has been finely tuned to the extent that it essentially feels perfect. Powersliding and weaving between traffic while pursuing your opponents is spot on, but it's the number of "skills" introduced throughout the game that truly catapults this game ahead of other arcade racers.

As you defeat certain key opponents, you'll earn new skills, such as the ability to control the pitch of your car while airborne (making the difference between landing well and damaging your car), slipstreaming other cars to build up a temporary boost meter, and getting your car up onto two wheels to squeeze through alleyways. The gradual introduction of these skills not only gives you something to look forward to (and try hard for), but also changes the feel of the game as it progresses.

If that weren't enough, motorcycles are introduced later on, which bring a whole new play dynamic to the experience—it's almost like two different racers within the same world.

■ Heavy Atmosphere

If there's one thing Rockstar has learned from its experience with the *Grand Theft Auto* series, it's how to make game with lots of character and atmosphere. *MCII* has plenty of both. Overall, the whole "underground" feel of illegal racing is captured perfectly, while also being given a dramatic action movie-like treatment. Its Career Mode could better be called a Story Mode, since you drive around town looking for other racers, and gain allies (and more enemies) as you challenge the street racing culture of each city. You also meet a number of



▲ The amount of detail on the cars and motorcycles is impressive, but not as high as it could be given everything that's going on in the city.

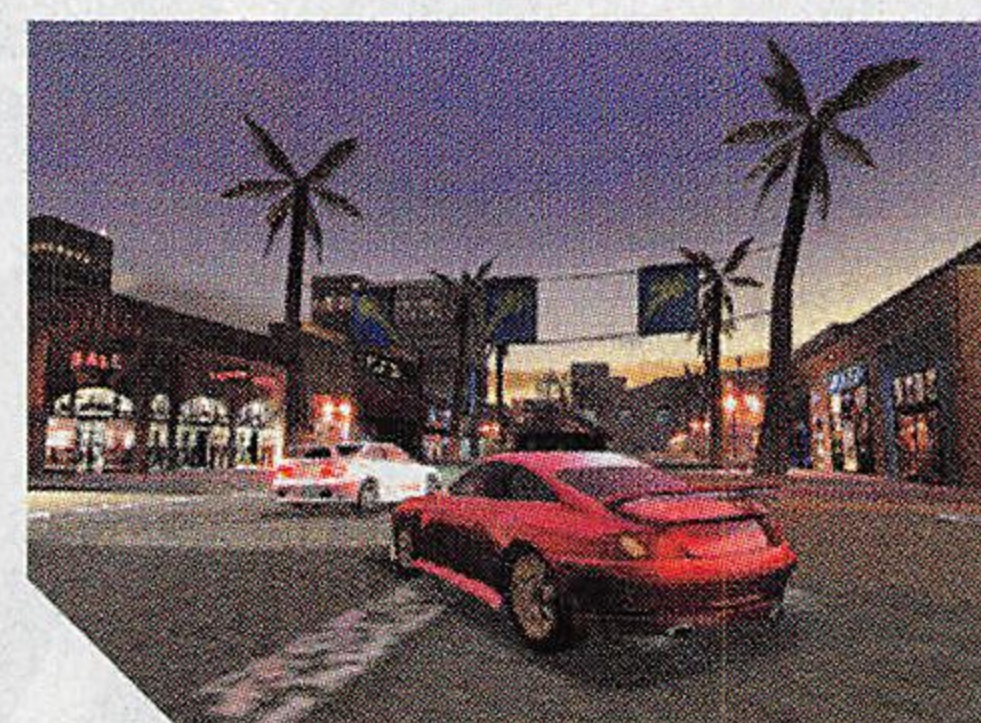
"THE SENSE OF SPEED IS ABSOLUTELY INCREDIBLE"

colorful characters who want to take you out of the picture—while you're racing these guys, they'll shout insults, comment on your driving, but sometimes offer unintended insight into ways to beat them. That, and the opponent AI is superb; you never feel like they're racing according to a "script"—nor does the traffic you're constantly weaving in and out of.

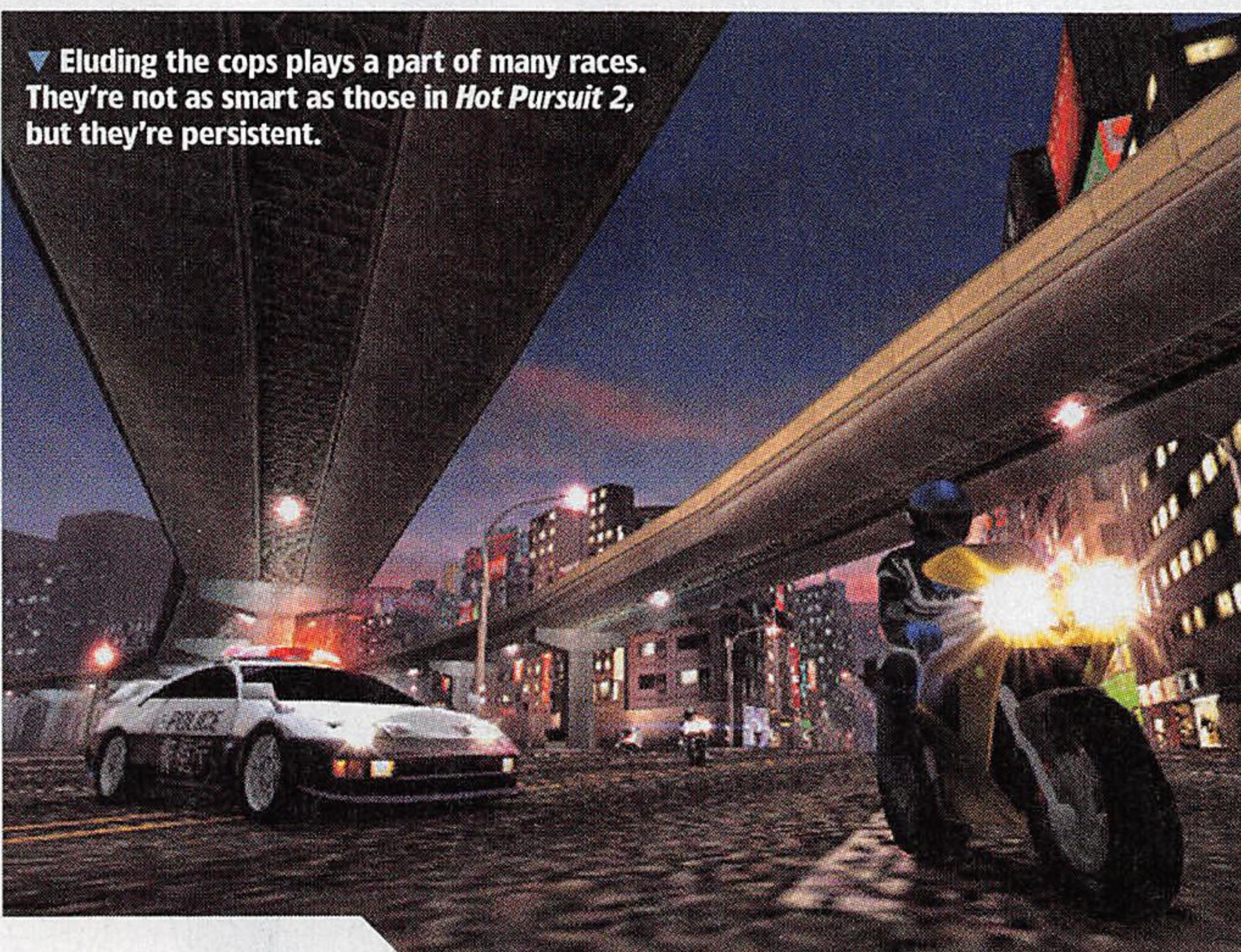
The cities themselves also have personalities beyond their looks and layout. They're definitely bigger than those in the first game, but also much more diverse. In Los Angeles, for



▲ Leaning into the corners is key to keeping your bike from losing traction in turns.



▲ The environment variety changes a lot through the course of each race.



▼ Eluding the cops plays a part of many races. They're not as smart as those in *Hot Pursuit 2*, but they're persistent.

example, you blast through downtown, head out on a complete freeway system, and make your way through the 'hood all in the course of one race. They're all also loaded with shortcuts and jumps—some obvious, some not-so-obvious—that take a bit of skill to find, but make you feel like you've just done something *really* cool when you have.

Another great thing about *Midnight Club II* is that you're never faced with exactly the same situation from one race to the next. Early races, for example, might simply be standard lap-based or start-to-finish fare, while other competitions will have you trying to elude the cops (which are smart and add a lot to the experience, although not as well done as in *NFS: Hot Pursuit 2*). Another scenario is having to find the fastest way to the finish through a series of unordered checkpoints.

■ Showroom Shine

Graphically, *MCII* represents a huge leap beyond the first game. It runs at 30 fps at all times, boasts a huge increase in city detail, and sports stunning new lighting and weather effects (the rain has to be seen in motion to be believed). The sense of speed is absolutely incredible, especially when you use your NOS (nitro). The effect is almost like slingshotting into lightspeed, but thanks to the game's rock-solid control, you can actually race at this blistering pace.

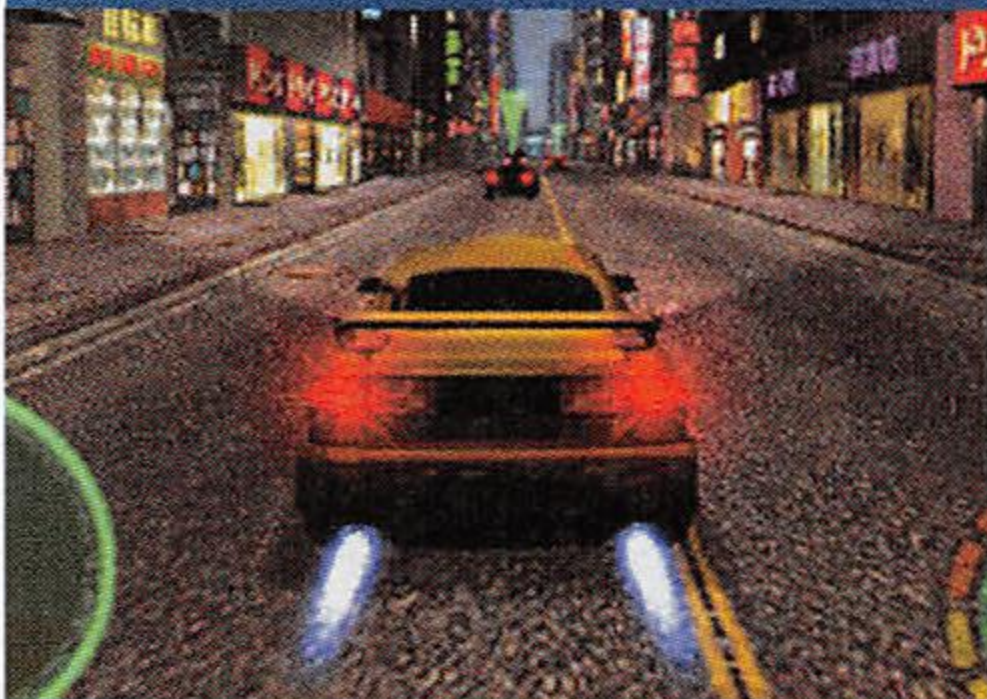
If there was one thing we could fault with the visual presentation, it would be the car models—they look good, but not great. Given the huge environments and the large number of racers and other traffic on-screen—not to mention the dozens of pedestrians—and the loss of a little car detail is a trade-off that we can more than live with.

HONE YOUR SKILLS

One of the greatest things about *MCII* is the way it gradually introduces new abilities, from slipstreaming to weight shifting.



▲ The ability to drive your car up on two wheels is not only handy for avoiding traffic, but cutting through tight alleyways, too. And it's freakin' cool!



▲ Nitro boost is gained early on, but can only be used once per race. In the meantime, you can slipstream behind other racers to build up extra boost.

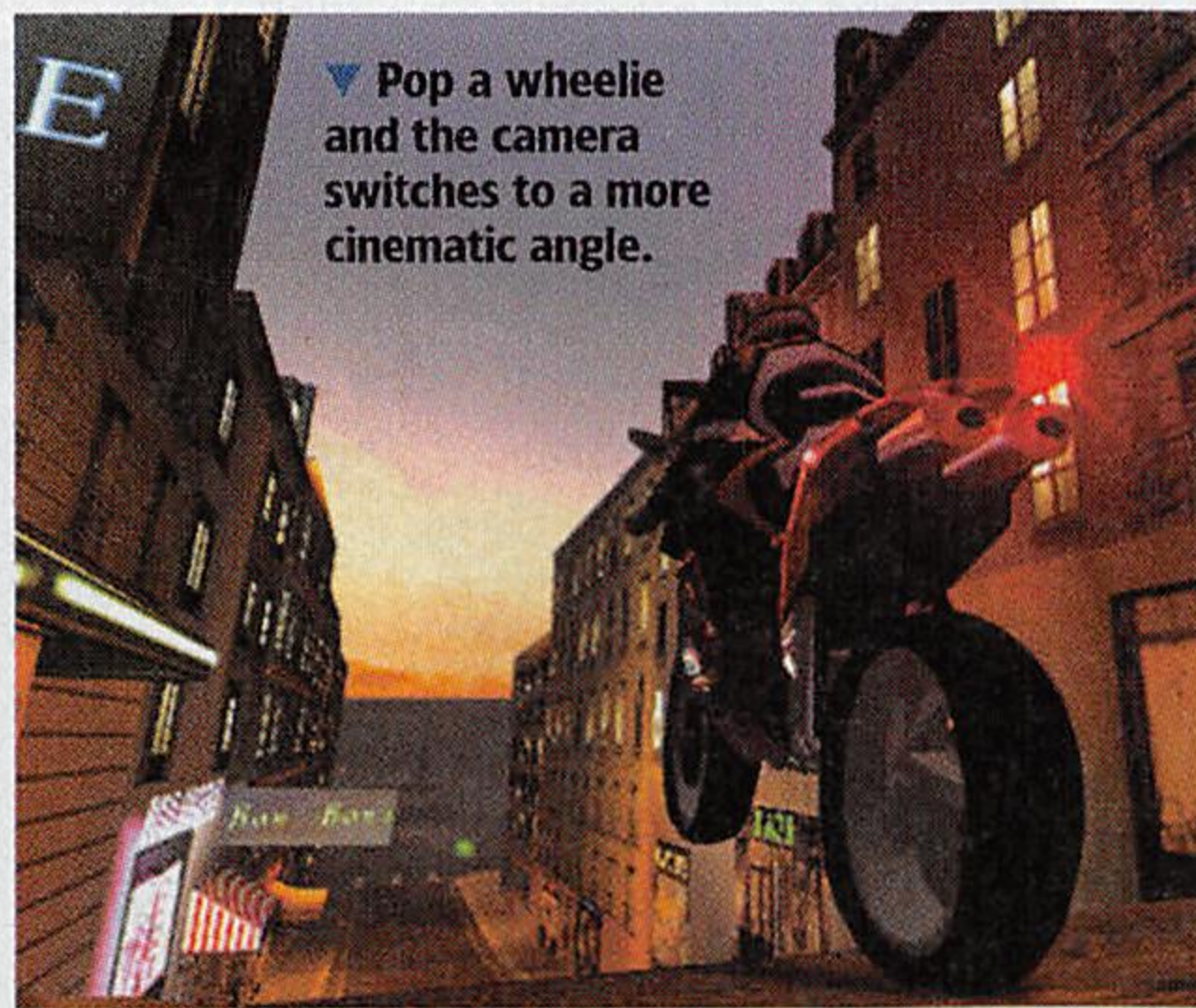
■ If That Weren't Enough

The team at Rockstar San Diego went above and beyond the call of duty in our opinion. Not only did they dial in every aspect of the basic game so perfectly, but they also had time left over to include a couple of outstanding extras. The biggest one of these being, of course, online play (via broadband connections only). It's seamless, hiccup-free, and the impressive number of game types they've dreamt up for it make *MCII* a nearly unlimited gameplay experience—you'll be playing for a long time even after completing the single-player game.

The other great addition is the race editor, which enables you to select a race type and set your own checkpoints within each city. You can then race it against the AI, a friend, or even online.

■ The Finish Line

Rockstar has overhauled an already good game and turned it into something incredible. We'd have liked to



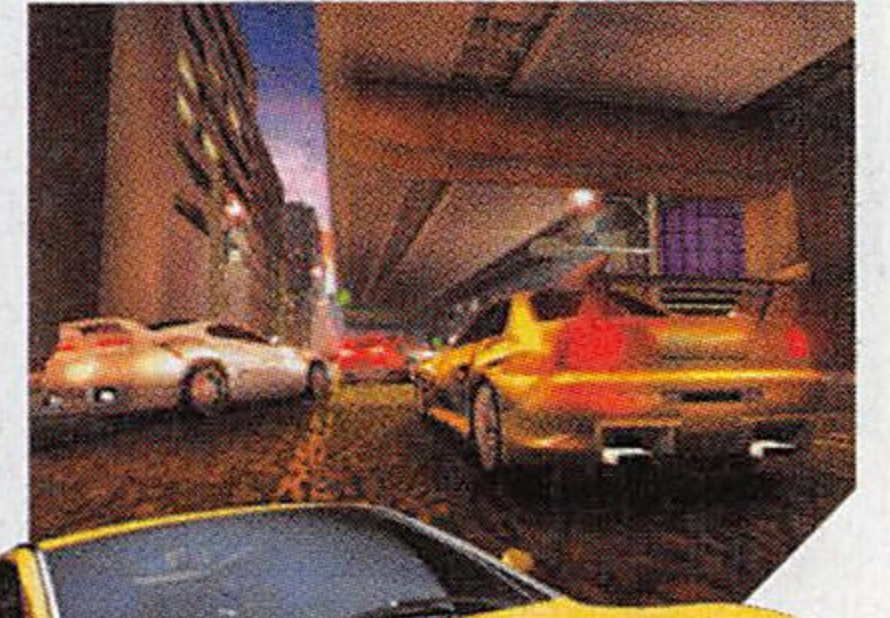
▼ Pop a wheelie and the camera switches to a more cinematic angle.

▼ Power-ups play a big role during the game's online races.



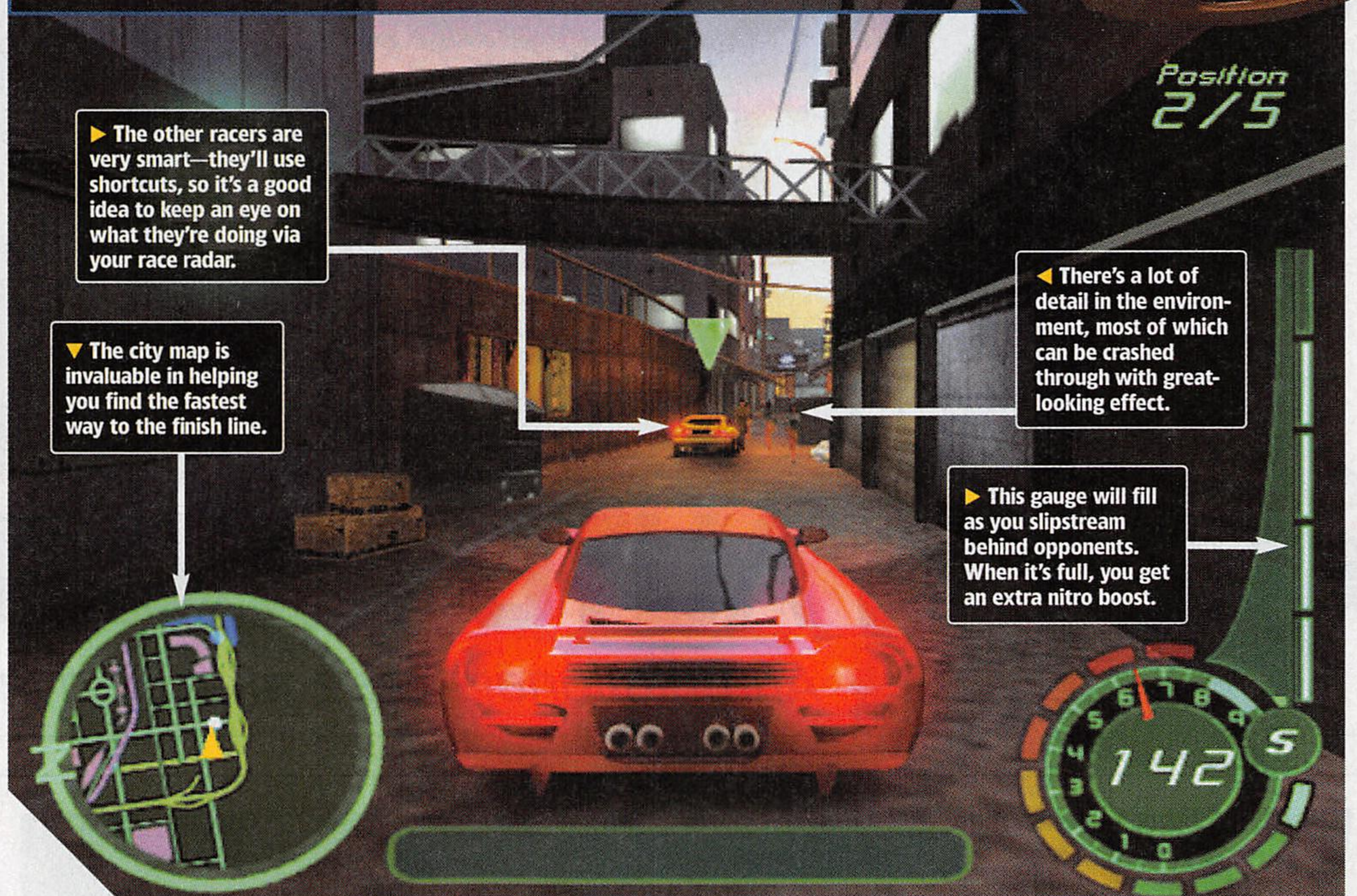
► The cars in *Midnight Club II* may not be real, but they sure are pretty... and ridiculously fast!

▼ Highways are integrated seamlessly into the race venues.



PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action



► The other racers are very smart—they'll use shortcuts, so it's a good idea to keep an eye on what they're doing via your race radar.

▼ The city map is invaluable in helping you find the fastest way to the finish line.

◀ There's a lot of detail in the environment, most of which can be crashed through with great-looking effect.

► This gauge will fill as you slipstream behind opponents. When it's full, you get an extra nitro boost.

see more car customization, particularly in paint schemes, but other than that we can't find anything we don't like about this game. *Gran Turismo* may be the most realistic racer PS2 has to offer, but *MCII* is definitely the most fun. Even non-racing fans will love it, and that's saying a lot. **RANDY NELSON**

HOW IT STACKS UP

Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec	10
Midnight Club II	10
Need For Speed: HP2	9
Burnout 2	9
Auto Modellista	4

“EVEN NON-RACING FANS WILL LOVE IT, AND THAT'S SAYING A LOT”



▼ Motorcycles are introduced later in the game and add a whole new gameplay dynamic.

PSM
FINAL SCORE **10**

CLASSIC

From its flawless control and presentation, to its huge amount of variety and online modes, *MCII* is one of the most fun and complete racing games we've ever played.

GAME INFO PUB/DEV CAPCOM | TYPE RACING | MAX PLAYERS EIGHT (ONLINE) | ESRB RATING EVERYONE



► There's no denying that *Auto Modellista* looks really, really nice. The cel-shading on the cars and courses is like nothing you've seen before.

ONLINE
COMPATIBLE

AUTO MODELLISTA

An unfortunate case of style over substance

Without a doubt, *Auto Modellista* is one great-looking game. The cel-shaded car models and cartoon-

style track renderings combine to create a visual style that is one part comic book, one part videogame. The detailed garage mode allows players to customize their cars in incredible detail. All of the major parts can be swapped out, painted, or tuned up.

An included decal editor allows you to create custom designs to apply to your car. A video editor gives you the power to edit your replays into a music video, and support for the PS2 Network Adapter means anyone with

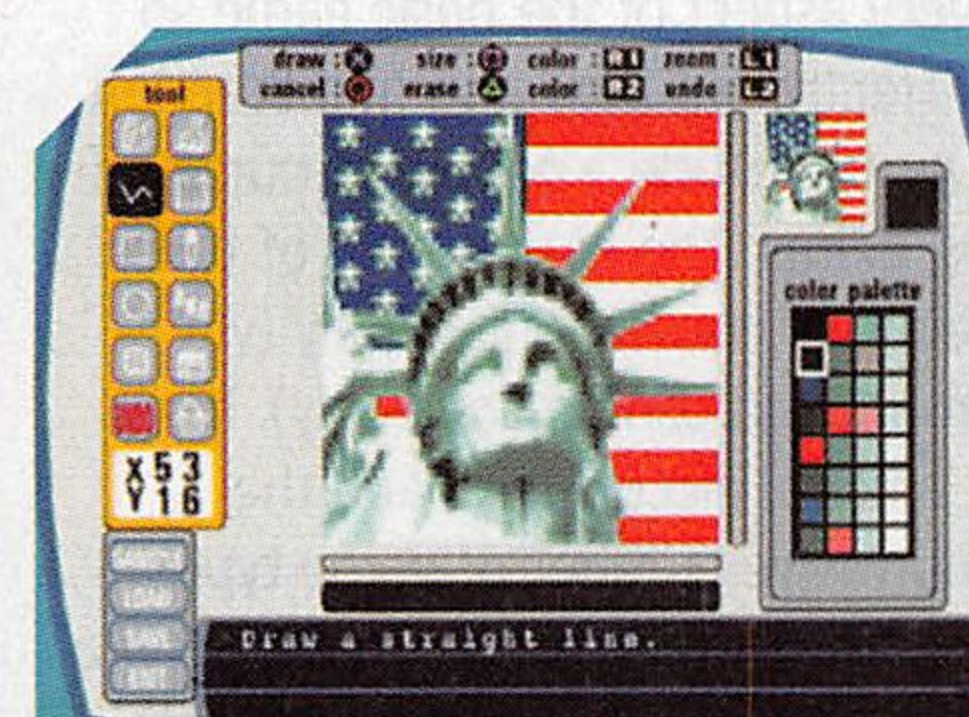
cable or DSL can hop online for some real live competition.

Unfortunately, Capcom was so busy working on these features, it forgot to include an actual game underneath all the fluff. Responsive handling and a good physics model are the core of every racing game, and those key features are completely lacking in *Auto Modellista*. In fact, the original *Ridge Racer* on PSone had better control than *Auto Modellista*. The biggest problem with the game is the utter lack of traction that these cars have. Fudging the physics model to allow for easier powerslides is one thing—after all, this is a game and powersliding is fun—but *Auto Modellista* goes too far. The end result is similar to driving on ice with completely bald tires. There is no reason a Miata should have its back end sliding out when it takes a corner at 35 mph.

Hoping that the control issues were a limitation of the Dual Shock, we hooked up the Logitech Driving Force steering wheel. At that point, things only got worse. Even though *Auto Modellista* advertises support for the Driving Force, what little tuning



▲ It's always a good idea to check your rear view mirror during a race. As a bonus, you can also check out your fine set of wheels.



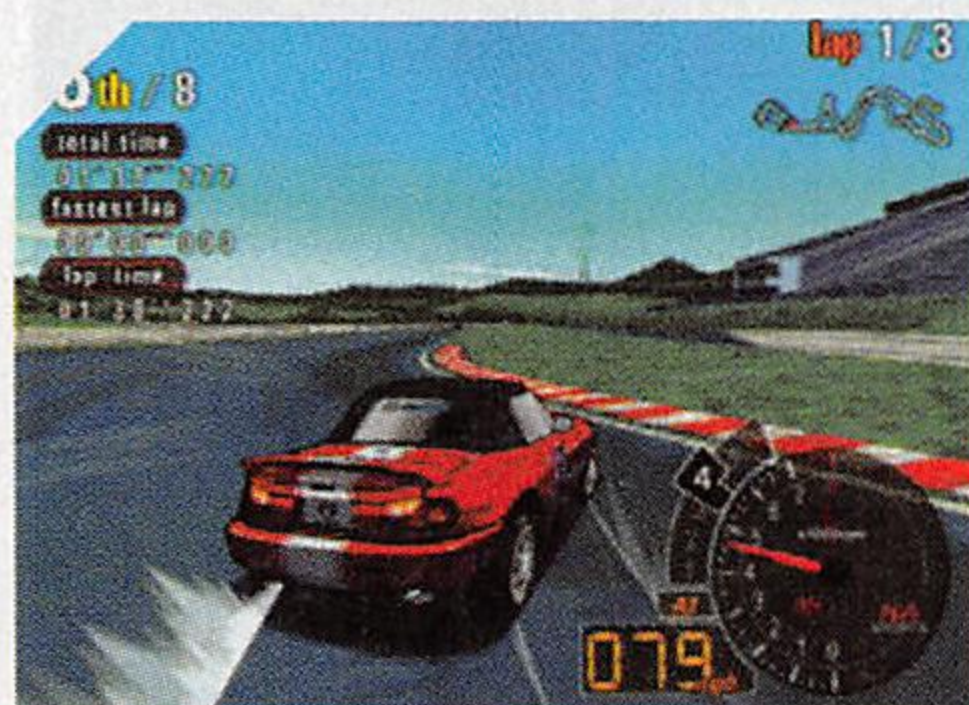
The decal editor allows you to create some complex images and apply them to your car. How about a PSM design?

went into the driving engine must have been centered around the Dual Shock. Playing with the Dual Shock is annoying enough, but playing with the Driving Force is near impossible.

Another problem with the game has to do with a weird programming bug. While driving in Arcade mode, the game would intermittently react as if random buttons were being rap-

idly pressed. This did not occur in the championship mode, but the simple fact that it occurred at all is unacceptable. We suspect it had something to do with a USB keyboard being connected (a peripheral supported by the game's online chat mode).

Auto Modellista supports online play, however, it is broadband only.



▲ As you powerslide around a turn, the comic book style action effects let you know what's happening.

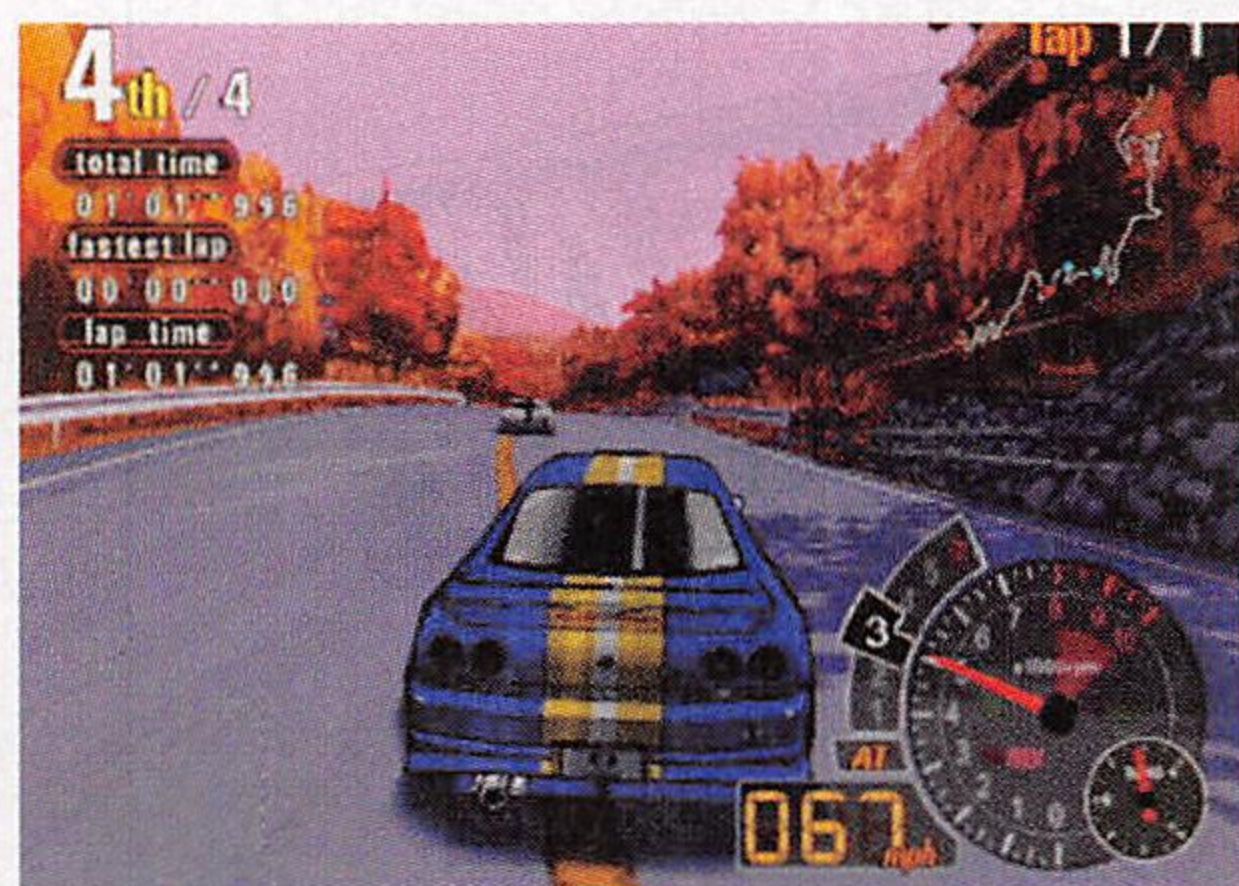
PSM
FINAL SCORE

4

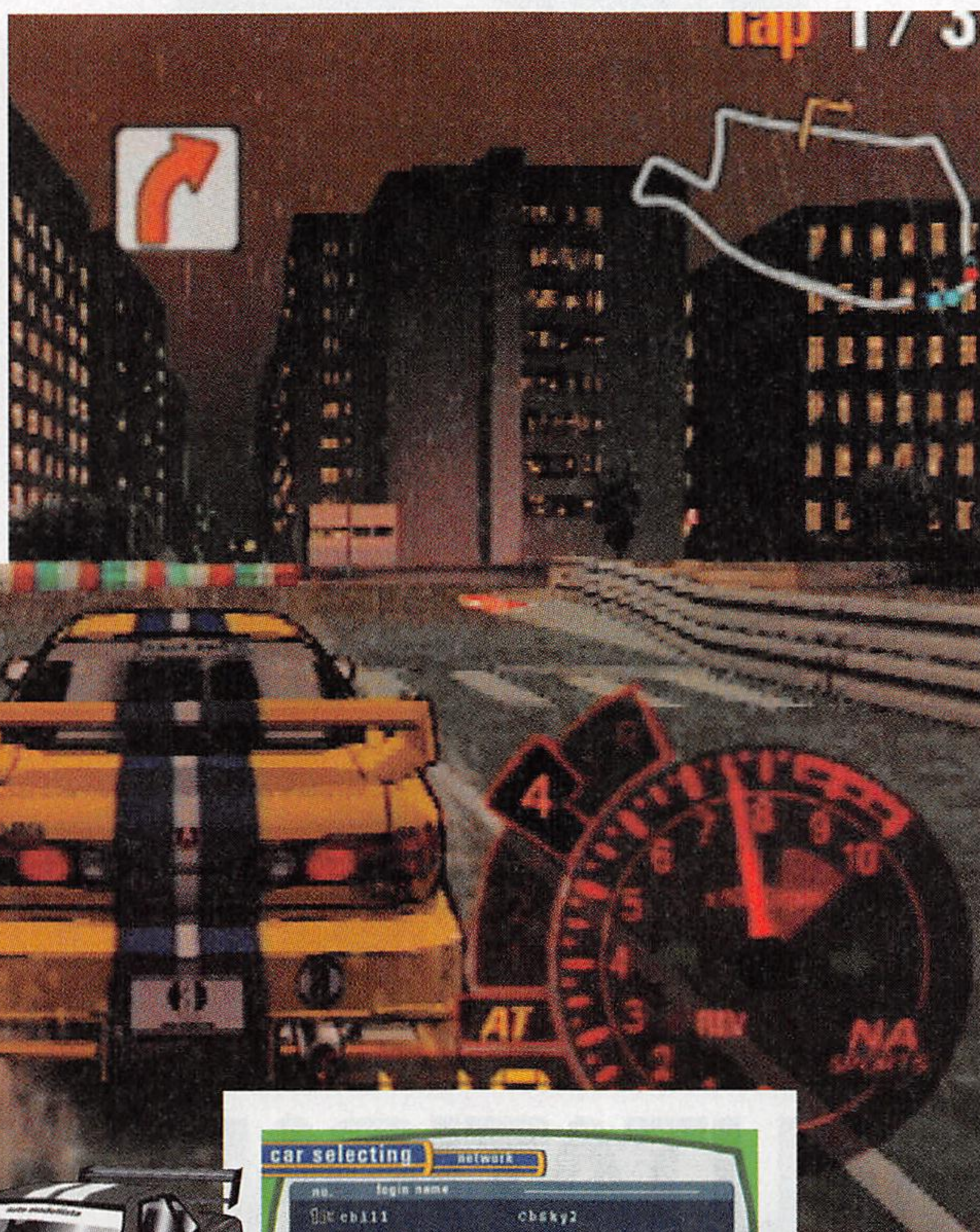
LACKING

There is no sweet center to this candy-coated piece of fluff. "Graphics do not make the game" has never been a truer statement. All those great modes and extras, wasted... sigh.

<< POWERSLIDING IS FUN, BUT AUTO MODELLISTA GOES TOO FAR >>

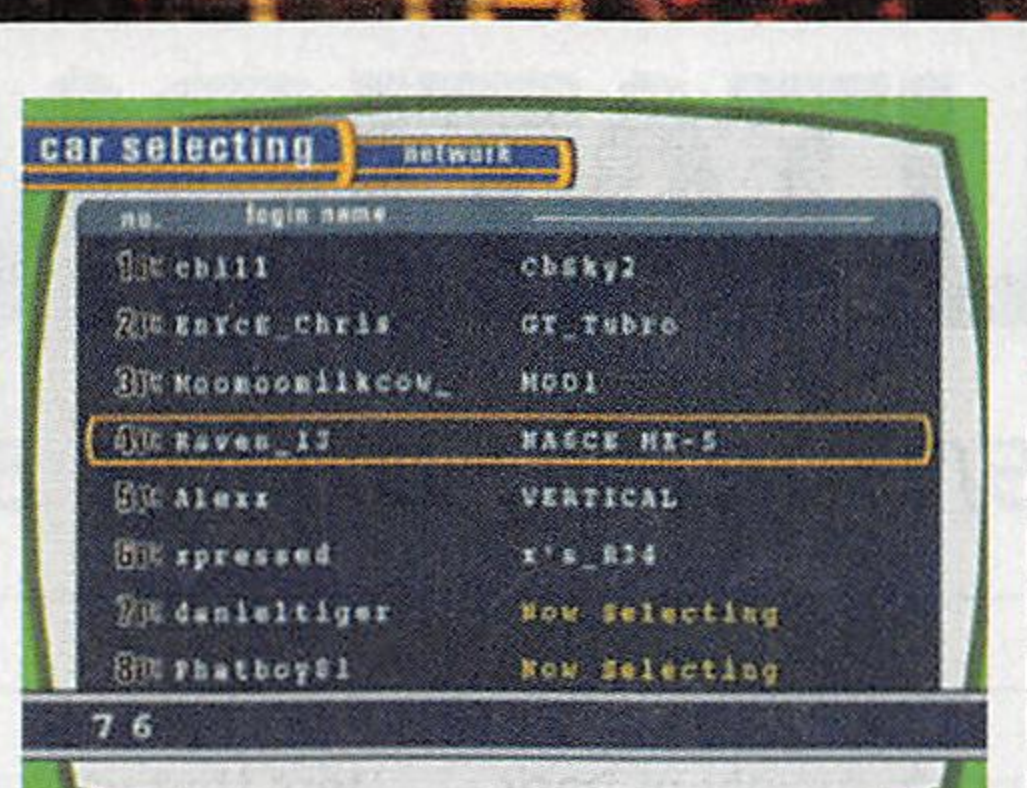


▲ Not all of the courses feature circular loops. Two of the courses are one way road tracks..



▲ Racing in the rain is a nice visual, but has little effect on your car.

► Oh, sure, it looks real nice, but is there any fun under that cel-shaded exterior?



◀ Setting up an online account can be cumbersome, but once you get into a game it plays well... at least as well as it plays offline.

Up to eight players can either play or observe an online game. Sadly, online play is just as frustrating as offline play and the number of players online when we raced seemed to bear that out. In our testing after the release of the game, we never saw more than a few dozen players online at any one time.

To its credit, the game does have an incredibly detailed garage where you can customize nearly every aspect of your vehicle. While it is possible to waste a good deal of time creating the perfect car, all the effort is for naught if racing the thing is no fun. *Auto Modellista* would have fared much better if the developers focused on the core game instead of the extra modes and visuals.

ADAM PAVLACKA

HOW IT STACKS UP

Gran Turismo 3	10
Midnight Club 2	10
Need For Speed: HP2	9
Burnout 2	9
Auto Modellista	4

Be The VeeJay

Perhaps the most disappointing thing about *Auto Modellista* is the fact that its most enjoyable part is its VJ mode. You can save your replays and then edit them into a music video. The controls are basic, but the results are surprisingly good.



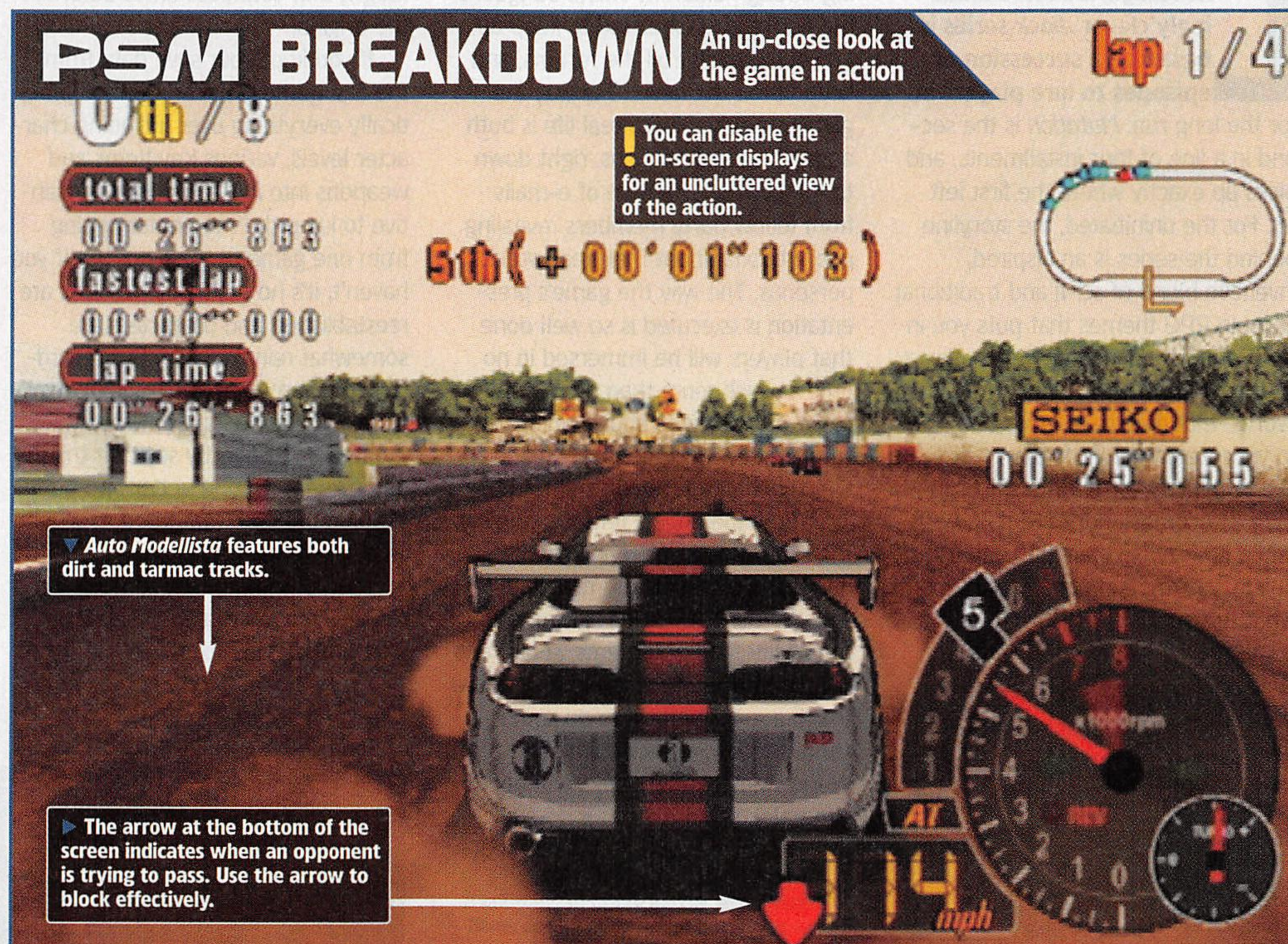
▲ The editing interface—this is where you create your masterpiece.

▼ You can even use special effects to enhance your videos.



PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action



! You can disable the on-screen displays for an uncluttered view of the action.

▼ *Auto Modellista* features both dirt and tarmac tracks.

► The arrow at the bottom of the screen indicates when an opponent is trying to pass. Use the arrow to block effectively.



▲ Your party members have fairly decent AI, but you can also command them via shortcut "dialogue."



▲ It may not be the prettiest RPG in PS2's growing library, but the conceptual and character designs are top notch.



◀ One of your avatar's unique skills is the ability to hack into the online game to unlock dungeons and data drain monsters for bonus goodies.

.hack//MUTATION

PS2's best online RPG... isn't really online at all

Like Namco's promise for *Xenosaga*, Bandai's amazingly clever *.hack* series is based on a succession of episodes to lure players in for the long run. *Mutation* is the second in a line of four installments, and picks up exactly where the first left off. For the uninitiated, the storyline behind the series is an inspired, inventive blend of sci-fi and traditional console RPG themes that puts you in front of a fictional computer to play a fictional online RPG called "The World" that may have more of a link to your "real world" life than you'd like to think. After players start slipping into comas and weird data bugs and a ghostly girl start popping up online, you're dead set on figuring out what the deal is.

The game consists mainly of hacking through different online dungeons, but you're also expected to keep up on your e-mail, troll the forums, and keep up on the news. The way the game cleverly mimics real life is both engrossing and hilarious, right down to the constant barrage of e-mails from fellow party members revealing goofy tidbits about their real world personas. The way the game's presentation is executed is so well done that players will be immersed in no time—which more than makes up for some of *Mutation*'s shortcomings in the repetitive dungeon design and difficulty balance department.

The battle engine remains roughly the same from the original, which is a nail-biting blend of true real-time hack 'n' slash, as well as giving you the ability to choose items, spells, and skills from the pause menu. Fights are tough and you'll have to do some serious leveling up through "The World's" interesting random dungeon generator, but the result is so addictive and enjoyable that it hardly mat-

ters that you've been there and fought that countless times before in the original.

If you kept your save data from the first game, you can transfer practically everything over, including character levels, various Key Items and weapons into *Mutation*. It's an incentive to keep the momentum going from one game to the next. But if you haven't, it's no big deal. Premises are reestablished and characters are somewhat reintroduced. But regardless, the gameplay speaks volumes if you can't keep up with the story.

We can't honestly say that this game keeps getting better and better simply because it was good to begin with and remains unchanged with promise of more of the same in the remaining two installments. But if it ain't broke, don't fix it, we say.

FRANCESCA REYES



▲ Trading goods with fellow players in "The World" gives you access to rare weapons and items.

HOW IT STACKS UP

Suikoden II	9
.hack//mutation	8
Dark Cloud 2	8
Breath Of Fire: DQ	7
Xenosaga	7



◀ E-mail in the virtual world of *Mutation* is just as goofy and time-consuming as email in the real world.

PSM 8 VERY GOOD
It's more of the same as the first game, but the clever concept is so well executed that it just picks up where it left off, seamlessly and addictively.

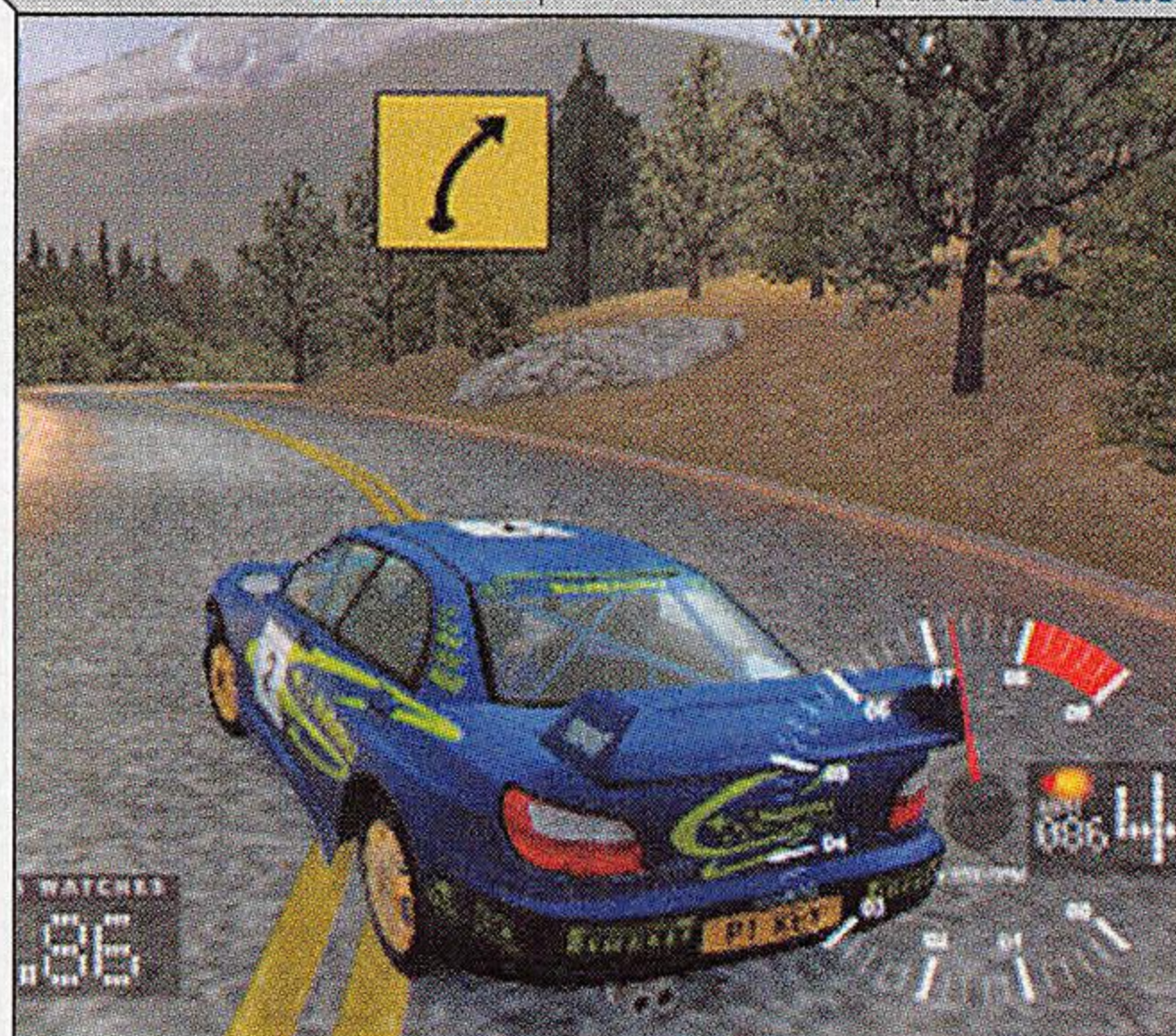


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PUB/DEV CODEMASTERS | MAX PLAYERS TWO | RATED EVERYONE



▲ Properly sliding through turns is the key to beating the clock, or getting to work on time.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3

PSM
MUST-BUY
BRONZE

Sega Rally is the game that introduced the world

of rally racing to most videogame players. While it was fun, it would be more appropriate to call it Rally Cross as opposed to true rally racing. After all, in rally racing, there are no other cars on the track. It's just you and the clock. Of course, calling the course a track is kind of misleading.

Rally courses consist of a combination of dirt roads, muddy fields, and the rare bit of tarmac. Traction on most of the courses is limited at best, which means you are constantly fighting for control of the vehicle. Imagine powersliding your way through a race and you have an idea of what to expect.

As the third game in the series, *Colin McRae Rally 3* is a definite step up from its predecessors. The car models have been greatly improved, both visually and in how they handle. Every car in the game features location-based damage. Simply scrape up the door and the car will still handle well. Smash up a fender though, and you will notice degraded performance.

One exceptionally notable aspect of the game is the sound. Even on a simple stereo setup, the sounds of the engine and the environment were crystal clear. Tearing around a corner on a gravel road it is actually possible to hear your tires sliding.

Although the championship mode found within the game is excellent—rally fans are going to eat it up—other modes are noticeably lacking. Sure, there is a two player mode, but where is the aforementioned Rally Cross? Where is time trial? Having these in the game would have helped round it out a bit and extended replay value.

One big negative to the game is the code screen. You have to buy unique codes for your game by dialing a 900 number. Not cool.

ADAM PAVLACKA

PSM **8** **VERY GOOD** Limited options, but excellent gameplay. A definite step up from earlier games in the series.

PUB AGETEC | DEV TAITO | MAX PLAYERS TWO | RATED EVERYONE



▲ *Magic Pengel* enables the pure of heart can draw monsters to fight one another. It's like crayola cockfighting!

MAGIC PENGEL: THE QUEST FOR COLOR

Formerly titled *Color Quest*, this critter-combat game enables the player to create their own monsters, called "doodles." You begin with only meager artistic abilities, but as you win more battles, earn more colors, and buy more brushes, you're limited only by your imagination. Wanna make a dragon? Go for it. While you're at it, crank out a purple Elvis impersonator, a cactus wearing sunglasses, and a flying cheese sandwich with flapping wings and a spinning mace. The possibilities are endless.

More importantly, your doodle's abilities and stats are determined by the color, size, shape, and number of its body parts. Granted, doodle construction isn't always easy—parts can't be cloned, and have to be completely redrawn if you want to change their color or position, and can only be erased in reverse order, so getting rid of an old part without destroying everything you drew after it can be tough. Still, with a bit of practice, you can create any creature you desire, and the game does a remarkable job of animating even the most bizarre combinations of anatomical parts.

This is all great, but there's a problem; actual gameplay isn't nearly as open-ended or comprehensive as the monster-creation process. The battle system is simply a reworking of stone-paper-scissors, and opponent AI is random, so anything beyond the most rudimentary strategy is useless. The doodle made with more ink will win 95% of the time, no matter what. Also, the fairy tale storyline, in which a young boy and girl are searching for their father in a kingdom ruled by evil oppressors, is charming—but it doesn't have anything to do with you. You literally watch it happen in various between-battle cut scenes, rather than participate in any way. *Magic Pengel* has a fantastic premise, but overall, there's just not enough here.

ERIC BRATCHER

PSM **6** **OKAY** *Magic Pengel* is a creative idea, but the battle system and storyline cause its colors to fade too quickly.

PUB CODEMASTERS | DEV BRAIN IN A JAR | MAX PLAYERS TWO | RATED E



▲ How'd you like to take one of these red-hot babies out for a thrilling test drive?

INDYCAR SERIES

PSM
MUST-BUY
BRONZE

At a glance, Indycar racing doesn't sound all that

exciting. After all, aside from a paint job, the cars on the track are largely similar and the tracks are all variations on an oval. However, this simplistic overview belies the skill and strategy required to race effectively. This depth is what draws fans to Indycar races year after year and it is that depth that Codemasters has managed to capture with *Indycar Series*.

If you are looking for a wild ride, you'll want to look elsewhere. Indycar racing is all about speed and looking for that perfect hole. With the average race taking between 200-250 laps there is no need to be overly aggressive. Instead, it is better to wait for a hole and take the opportunity when it is golden.

Knowing when to make a move is as much a matter of driving skill as it is knowing the track. The speedways may be similar in design, but they deceptively hide a number of key differences. Attempting to race them all in the same manner is the surest way to find yourself at the back of the pack.

Because the Indycar races are so long, pitting your car is a necessity, not a luxury. Pitting takes time, though, time you do not often have. As a result, choosing when to pit is a key part of racing strategy. Doing it at the wrong time can easily cost you the race.

Visually, *Indycar Series* is a bit on the bland side, but that has more to do with reality than a lack of inspiration on the developer's part. After all, the courses in the game do mirror their real-life counterparts.

Indycar Series is likely to bore gamers who grew up on a diet of extreme games, but those of you who can look past the lack of a turbo boost button will discover a game with more depth than your average racer.

ADAM PAVLACKA

PSM **8** **VERY GOOD** Solid control and attention to detail create an authentic replica of the Indycar experience.

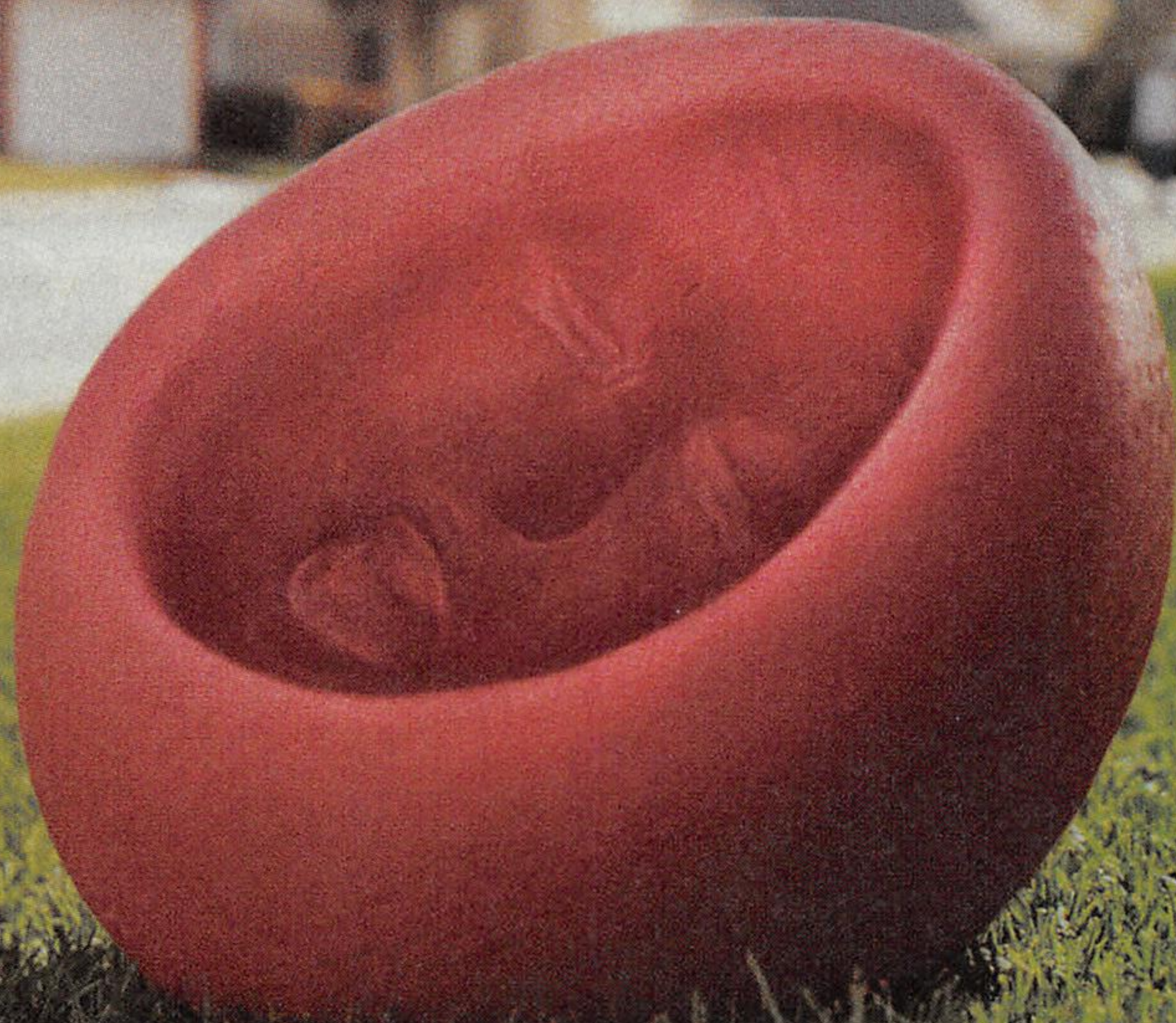


LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.



Dodgeball

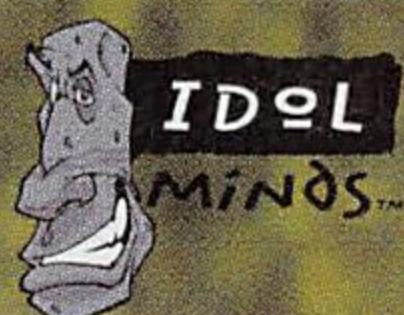
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PlayStation®2



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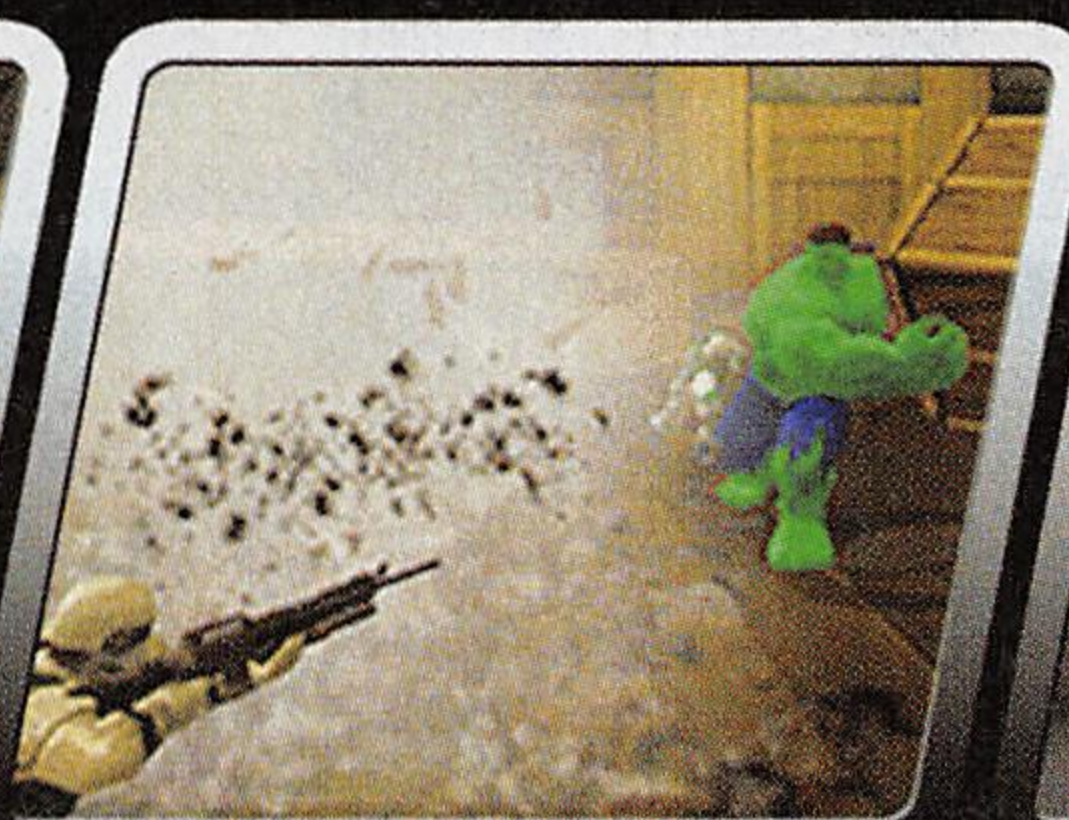
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Violence



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ONLY IN
PSM
FIRST LOOK





♥♥ The developers have made significant strides in improving and reinvigorating the *Legacy of Kain* series. This game will, by far, be the most ambitious of the franchise and include many important changes.



LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE

A NEW LEGACY BEGINS...

Since its birth on the original PlayStation, way back in 1996, the *Legacy of Kain* series has definitely risen to make a serious bite mark on the action/adventure genre. Its compelling storylines, RPG-ish elements, and challenging puzzles have drawn in a large number of gamers, all of whom were looking for something a bit different to sink their teeth into. Now, it seems they're going to get a real mouthful...

Over the years, the series has seen its share of changes, both good and bad, and matured into two different series: *Blood Omen* and *Soul Reaver*. Yet, while focusing on two very different characters (Kain and Raziel), both series definitely intertwined amongst themselves, helping to paint a more detailed picture of the world of Nosgoth. However, in the end, it looks that the decision to split up the franchise might not have been the best one. Both *Blood Omen 2* and *Soul Reaver 2* seemingly suffered from the split focus, and an apparently limited development time. There were definitely elements that were

playable characters. Kain's and Raziel's stories are already so intertwined, [they] thought it would be intriguing if this next installment played out from both perspectives." After that decision was made, there was no turning back, and the first step in the creation of what will probably be one of the best PS2 action/adventure titles ever, was taken.

IMPROVEMENTS EVERYWHERE

When asked about the biggest differences between *Defiance* and

the series definitely won't be disappointed in the improvements, as they look to make the overall experience that much more enjoyable and unforgettable. From refining the combat to tweaking the camera system, a lot of work is being done based on comments from players just like you. See, you can make a difference.

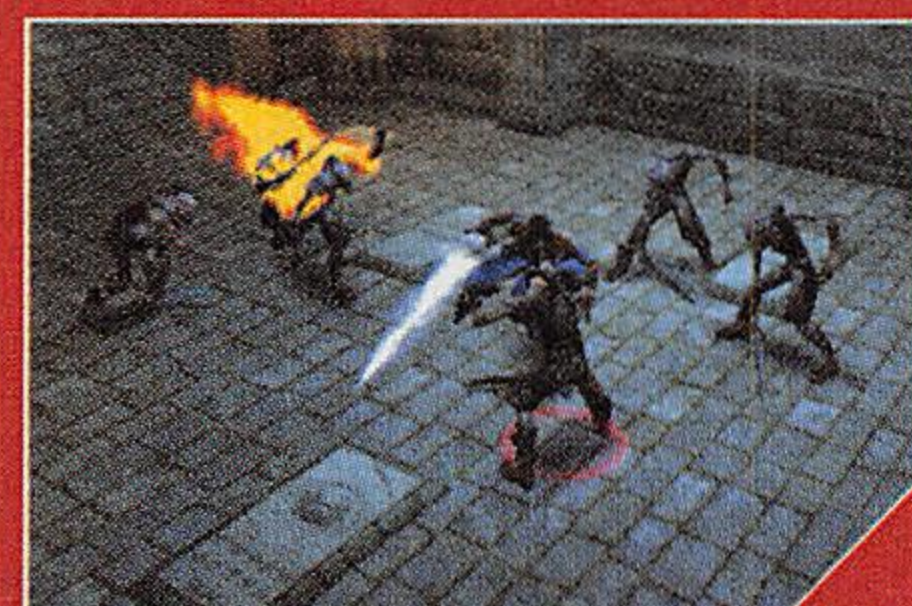
FRIENDS OR FOES

In the past, Raziel and Kain have only been playable in their own perspective games. However, that's about to change. You'll now actually be able to control both characters, witnessing the unfolding story through both pairs of eyes. This game directly follows the events that occurred in *Soul Reaver 2*, but the player doesn't necessarily have to have played that game in order to understand everything that's going on.

Time-wise, the story takes place mainly in Nosgoth's "dark age", the period chronicled in the original *Blood Omen* title. The relationship between Raziel and Kain is "as murky as ever" — it's not clear whether they are adversaries or reluctant allies, though it will become apparent to the player that there are dark forces striving

FIGHTING COOLNESS

Thanks to a vastly improved fighting system and a little inspiration from *Devil May Cry*, our two lead characters are now able to pull off some pretty neat stuff. From air juggles to devastating combos, this dirty pair are armed to the teeth.



▲ You won't find very many one-on-one battles anymore...



▲ ...but you'll have plenty of attacks to take on the slaving hordes.



▼ These environments are so large that you'll want to explore every little inch, and try to discover hidden areas for special bonuses.

cool and innovative, but both titles lacked a bit of that spark, that polish that separates a good game from a truly great game.

Hoping to capture that spark, the development team at Crystal Dynamics felt they had to take one major step forward and take a closer look at the game's design. Just simply pumping out another sequel wouldn't cut it. After all, *Legacy of Kain: Defiance* was going to be the fifth game in the series. It had to be something special, something quite... revolutionary.

Right off the bat, everyone decided to "reunite the series under the *Legacy of Kain* banner, and to include both Raziel and Kain as

its predecessors, the team definitely wasn't lacking of responses. According to them, the essence of the game needed to be action, but without "sacrificing the adventure elements which have always been a hallmark of the series." There won't be any "dumbing down," but there are definite elements that should hopefully make this game appeal to a broader audience. The puzzles are more environmentally-based, and not just your run-of-the-mill "find the key" sort of challenges. The overall pacing of the title is faster, and the story, while still grand in scope, has been more tightly focused. Fans of

to manipulate both of their destinies."

Akin to a traditional book, the game is split up into chapters, alternately focusing on Kain and Raziel. Throughout the game, the two tragic figures will cross paths numerous times and their actions will have definite repercussions, affecting both of their futures. However, it's the present storyline that you readers will probably be most interested in.

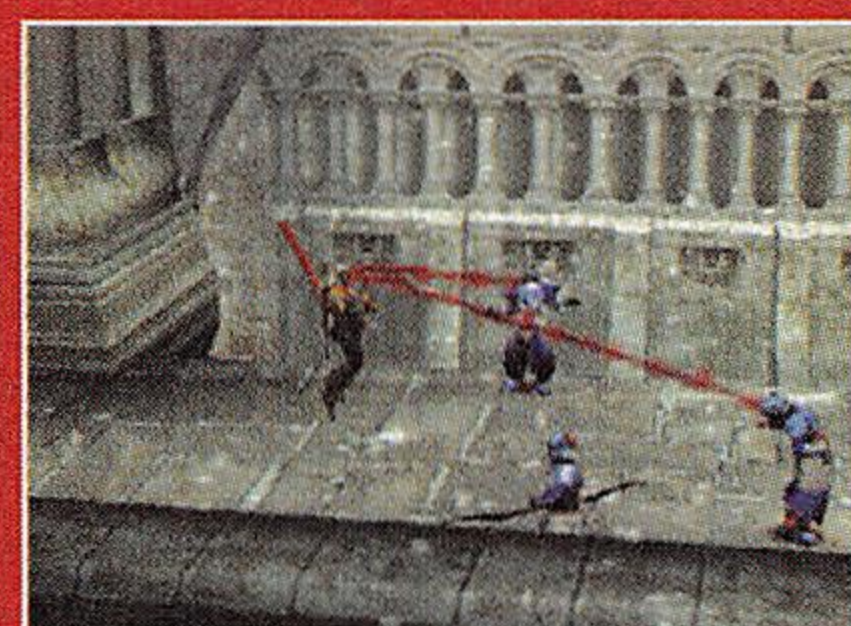
Raziel has discovered that he's a prisoner of the Spectral realm, and that the deity he once served is no longer willing to help. He'll have to "rely on his dark side in order to survive", but that in turn is slowly making him more cynical and sinister. He trusts no one and it seems that the spark of good within him is slowly fading away. Kain, on the other hand, has always been quite evil



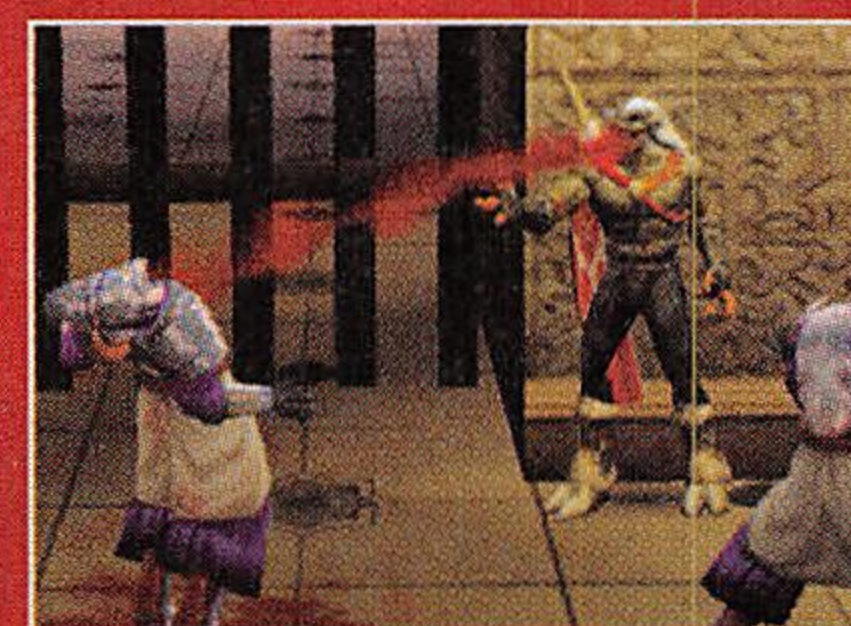
▲ The Spectral Plane is now a whole lot darker and dangerous. It's no Disney World!

I GAVE AT THE OFFICE...

Being vampires and all, both our "heroes" need to absorb blood and/or spirits in order to sustain their lives. The challenge, though, is in the fact that their weapons also need to feed in order to become stronger. Balancing out this feeding frenzy will be a necessary strategy in the game.



▲ While Raziel needs to absorb souls in order to survive, Kain just prefers to go for the neck. There's nothing funny, at least to vampires, about feeding time.



in his methods, but it hasn't been until now that he's realized "his actions have played into his enemies' hands." For the first time ever, the blood sucker "finds himself faced with uncertainty" as he attempts to confront enemies who have yet to reveal themselves.

Unwilling to spoil any of the twists and turns that this story might unravel, the team has yet to reveal much of it. However, they have promised a grand tale that's bound to leave a lasting effect on gamers everywhere.

THE CAMERA SEES ALL

From the start of this project, the main focus has been on getting the camera system to work in a smooth, yet unique, manner. According to the team, "so many 3rd-person action/adventure games look the same, because most developers are just using the same camera [system]." So, for this *LoK*, they really wanted the camera to be something really cinematic and fluid. Taking inspiration from such games as *ICO*, the team worked hard on a camera that "seamlessly flows to present the action." Instead of just being locked behind the character or "elastically" following them, the camera in this game will intelligently track the on-screen events, while utilizing more Hollywood-esque angles and fades.

A classic example of this, which was shown to us, happened when Raziel walked around the corner to a set of stairs leading to a spacious garden area. Instead of the camera just following him down the stairs, it actually quickly faded to a more distant perspective, showing the entire area (which was quite impressive looking), as well as the handful of

enemies that were waiting to attack. In this case, not only was the camera useful, but it also used some tricks that made the situation feel that more cinematic.

THE ART OF FIGHTING

Along with the camera system featured in the past *LoK* games, one of the other main areas internally scrutinized by the team at Crystal Dynamics was the combat system. Over the last few games, the fighting had become "somewhat tedious" and a bit too "drawn-out and tactical."

Basically, it had too much emphasis on strategy and patience rather than satisfaction and just plain coolness. The feature of being able to pick up any weapon (e.g., spears, torches, swords) and use it, while a bit innovative, was just something carried forth from the first *Soul Reaver*, and actually ended up making the combat "too broad and shallow." There simply wasn't enough depth or over-the-top moves to keep players constantly interested.

With that insight firmly planted in their minds, the team set out to change the very structure of combat, turning to games like Capcom's *Devil May Cry* for the basis of some grander ideas. Right off the bat, all of the minor weapons and items were dropped and Raziel and Kain were given only one main weapon each — "a different incarnation of the legendary Reaver blade." It may seem a bit limiting, but the exact opposite is

true. With the abilities and size of the weapons set in stone, the animators can easily create some truly impressive combo chains and character-specific attacks. They no longer have to create a generic set of moves that have to work with a large variety of offensive items. They actually have carte blanche to create attacks that are just plain cool; attacks that even Dante would be jealous of. Air juggles, specialized charge moves, crowd-clearing attacks—that's just the tip of the iceberg. "Both characters are also able to integrate telekinesis and feeding mechanics into combos and finishing moves within combat." In fact, it seems that telekinesis will play a very important role in both the combat and puzzle-solving.

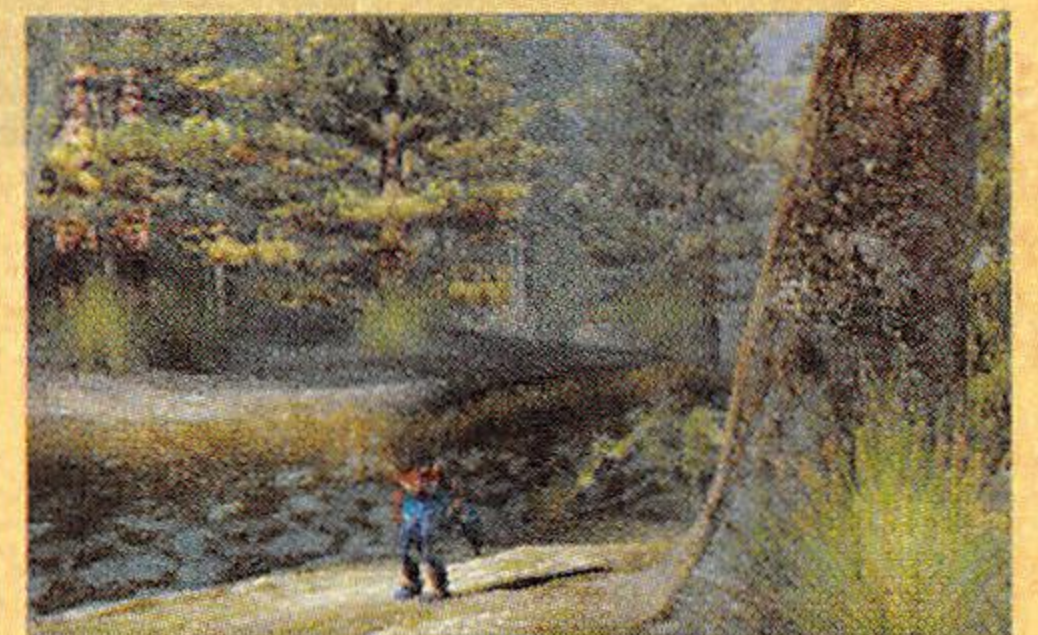
THE MIND'S EYE

To supplement their standard attacks and vampiric powers, both Kain and Raziel will be able to perform an assortment of telekinetic (TK) feats, the most powerful of which can be used in combat. "With supernatural grace and effortless power, they are able to blast enemies into deadly or damaging environmental elements. TK'd enemies may slam into blunt obstacles (like a wall or column), be impaled on sharp objects or [burned] by fire, smashed into breakable objects, or be thrown off ledges to their deaths."

Of the two characters, Kain's TK powers are more developed and powerful. He can pick up objects or enemies with far greater ease than Raziel, and propel them with both superior force and precision. He can also perform more impressive actions, such as "toppling mighty pillars, tearing down architecture, and forcing open otherwise-sealed barriers."



◀ It's impressive how the environments have changed. With the camera pulled back further, you can truly appreciate the designs.



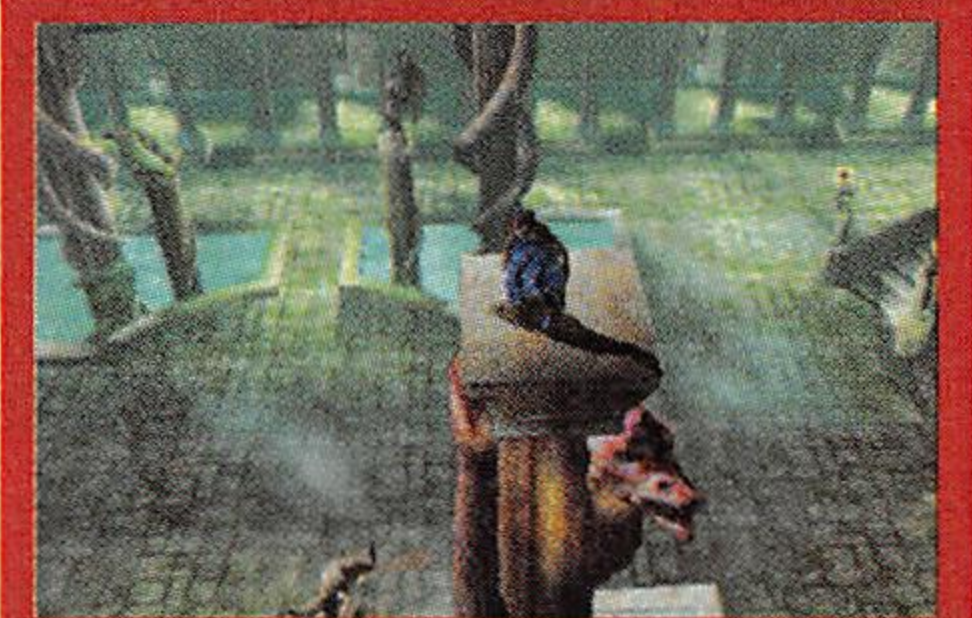
▲ The lush forest environments contrast nicely with the stone-like building interiors.



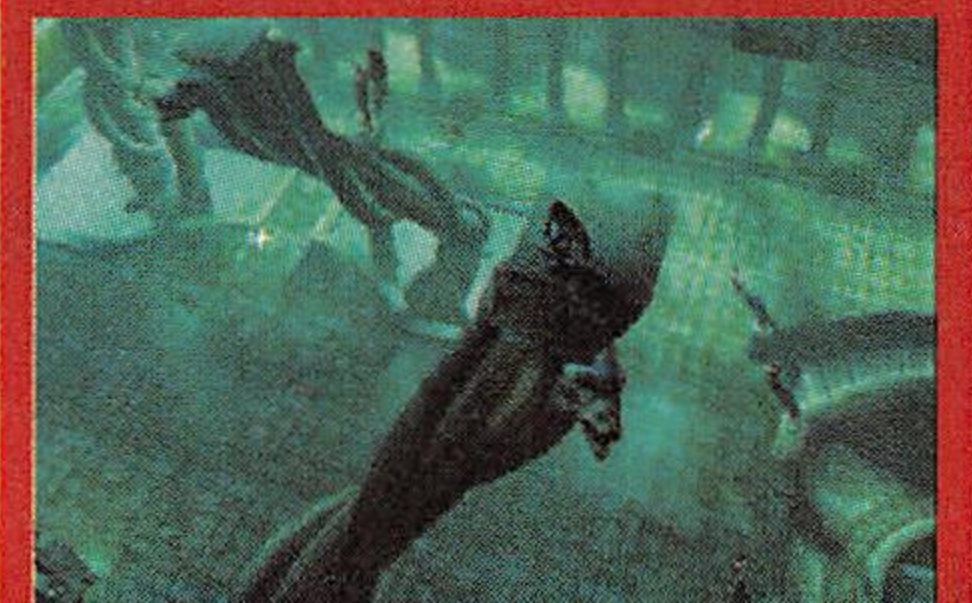
▲ It will now be rare for you to have one-on-one battles. Enemies attack in groups.

THE SPECIAL SHIFT

Raziel retains his ability to shift between the Spectral realm (the land of the dead) and the Material plane (the realm of the living), and he'll need to use it often in order to solve various puzzles and traverse impassible areas.



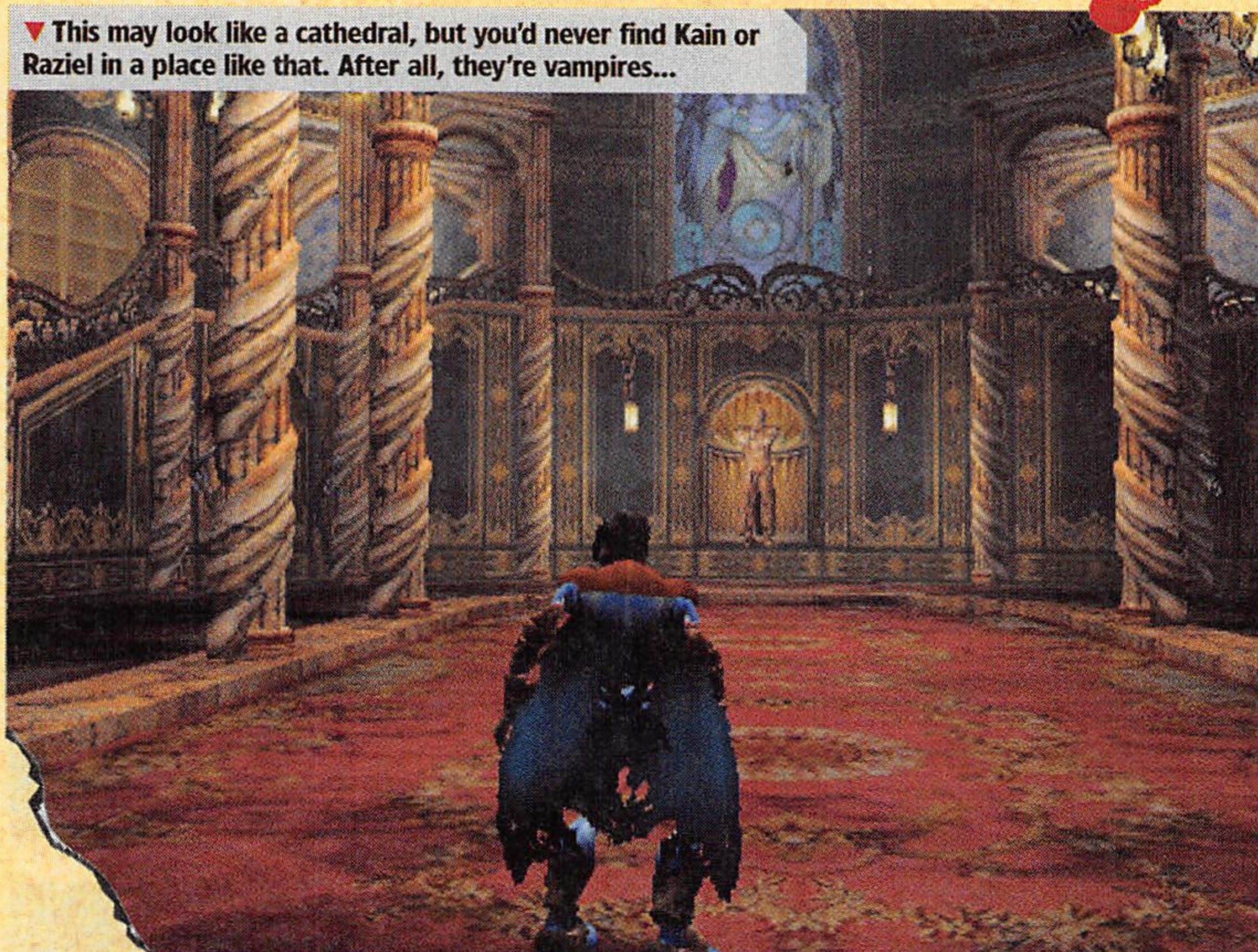
▼▲ The architectural differences between the two worlds seems even more warped this time around.



▼ Despite the increase in polygons and texture detail, the character models haven't changed that much. They do showcase better facial and attack animations, though.



▼ This may look like a cathedral, but you'd never find Kain or Raziel in a place like that. After all, they're vampires...



you'll be traveling though comes off far more epic and grand. Enclosed hallways and rooms, while still present in some form, now appear to be in the minority. Countless breathtaking vistas and panoramic views hint at the possibilities of exploration and denounce the idea of a strictly linear path.

Diversity was also the name of the game, as the team is working hard to "provide a balance between organic terrain and architectural settings. There's a variety of levels and styles throughout the game, including fortresses and caverns, cathedrals and forests, mansions and catacombs." Some of these

locations might be familiar to dedicated fans of the series, but there are plenty of new areas that will feel completely unique and different than what's been seen in the past titles." Just check out these screenshots to get a juicy taste of some of them.

A LEGACY TO BE PROUD OF

With around six more months of development time left, *Defiance* unfortunately won't be rising from its coffin anytime soon. That might disappoint some of you, but it also means that plenty of polish, fine-tuning, and balance can still be introduced. Several of the environments still need to be created as well, but if they're anything like what we've seen already, everyone is truly going to be blown away. It's definitely a sight to behold. There's almost a night and day difference between the ambition level of this title and all the past games in the *Legacy* series, which is easy to see just by sitting down and spending a few minutes with it. There's no doubt in our minds that *Defiance* will leave a memorable impact on the genre, once it releases this Fall. Other adventure titles had better watch out, because this game's looking to head straight for the jugular. **P**

AN EPIC WORLD

Thanks to a talented pool of artists, the *Legacy of Kain* games have always featured fairly detailed environments and a great number of architecturally impressive building designs. It was the bitter irony, then, that the cameras in these games were generally drawn in so closely (mainly due to technical challenges) that players weren't easily able to grasp the breadth and scope of each new area they came upon. Constraining the environments and the player's views of them was a major factor in keeping the framerate consistent and the number of on-screen characters

decently high. Ah, the joys of a first-generation game engine, right? Fortunately, things are a lot better this time around.

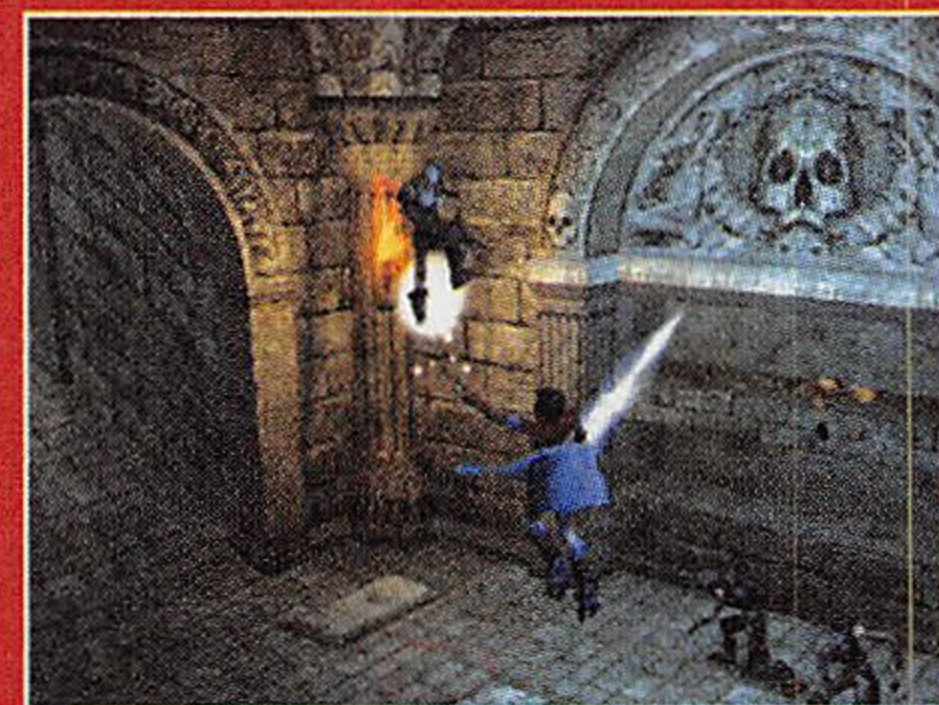
Because this is the second *LoK* game utilizing this engine, the programmers have been able to spend a lot more of their time improving and optimizing the visual side of things.



These enhancements have allowed the team to not only "enrich" the visuals, with better lighting effects, more realistic shadows, and what not, but also (more importantly) to create larger, more expansive environments than were ever possible before. The game has been completely opened up and the world that

TELEKINETIC TKO

In addition to their fighting prowess, Kain and Raziel also have an assortment of telekinetic (TK) abilities that can be used for combat or puzzle solving. Of the two, however, Kain has a greater and more precise control over his TK powers. He can actually topple pillars.



▲ Just like a Jedi Knight, you'll be able to pick up opponents and send them hurtling in whatever direction you want. Cause the most damage by impaling them on wall spikes.

CONCEPTUAL SPACES

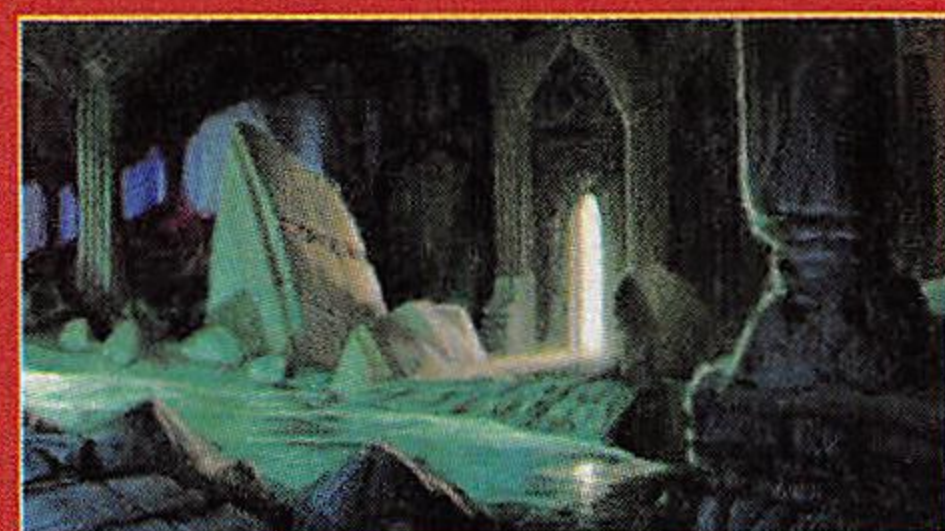
Since the game still has a ways to go in its development cycle, we were only able to get screens from a few of the many areas. However, here's some concept art of some of the other major locations that you'll end up traveling to. Make no mistakes about it... this game will be large.



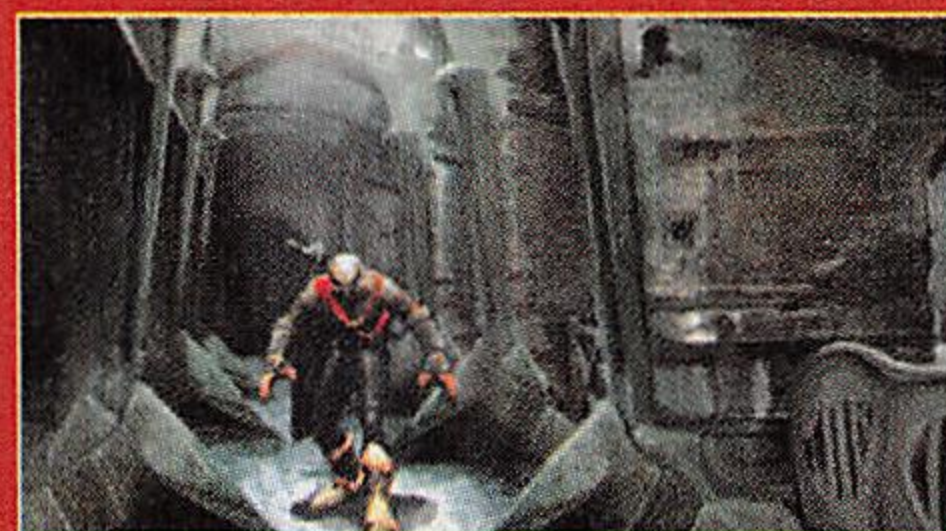
▲ The Elder Cavern



▲ The Garden



▲ The Ruins



▲ The Citadel



▼ Raziel retains his ability to glide, using his "broken" wings, and will have to rely on it far more often in this game.

Hours ago, Minutes ago.

This man was behind barbed wire.

Locked in the strongest cage man could devise.

This man plotted. This man dared. This man lived...

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A New Class of Monkey



Pink Monkey

Most Likely to Be a Pop Star



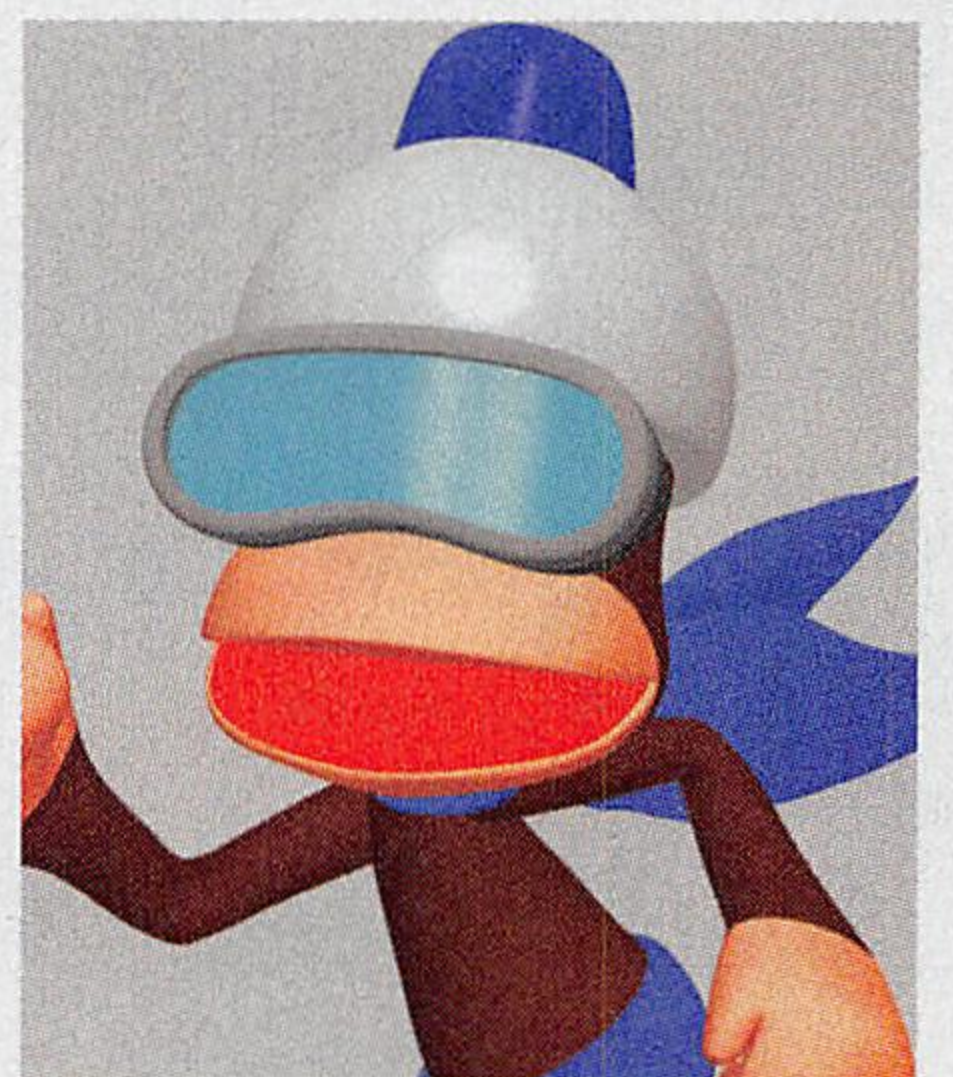
El Toro

Most Likely to Grab the Bull by the Horns



Harley Q. Win

Most Likely to Annoy the King



Billy

Most Likely to Get a Speeding Ticket



Monko Polo

Most Likely to Find a Legendary Banana



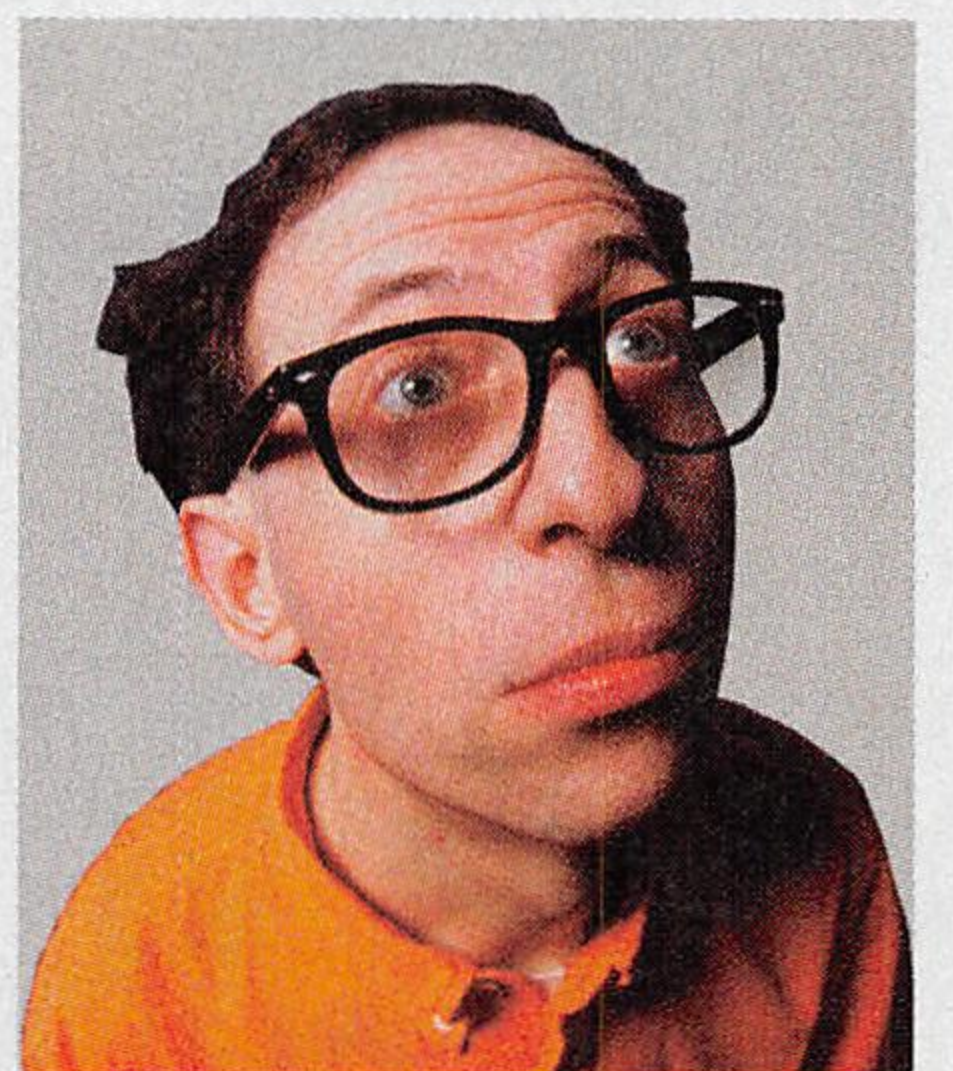
Natalie

Most Likely to Lose Her Wits



Marshall

Most Likely to Punch the Ref



Larry

Most Likely to Step in Monkey Poo



Mr. White

Most Likely to Be an Evil Scientist



Balboa

Most Likely to Live in a Meat Locker



Norman

Most Likely to Drive a Humvee



Specter

Most Likely to Take Over the World



Comic Mischief
Mild Violence



Catching Madness



Leo

Most Likely to Catch a Fever



Stephenson

Most Likely to Walk the Plank



Jimmy

Most Likely to Save the World



George

Most Likely to Be Inquisitive



Buzz

Most Likely to Be Lost in Space



Arthur

Most Likely to Get Pierced



Parka

Most Likely to Chill



Punto

Most Likely to Sink the Gondola



Cleo

Most Likely to Walk Like an Egyptian



Yellow Monkey

Most Likely to Be a Pro Wrestler



Libby

Most Likely to Swim to Ellis Island



Spud

Most Likely to Be a Hypnotist

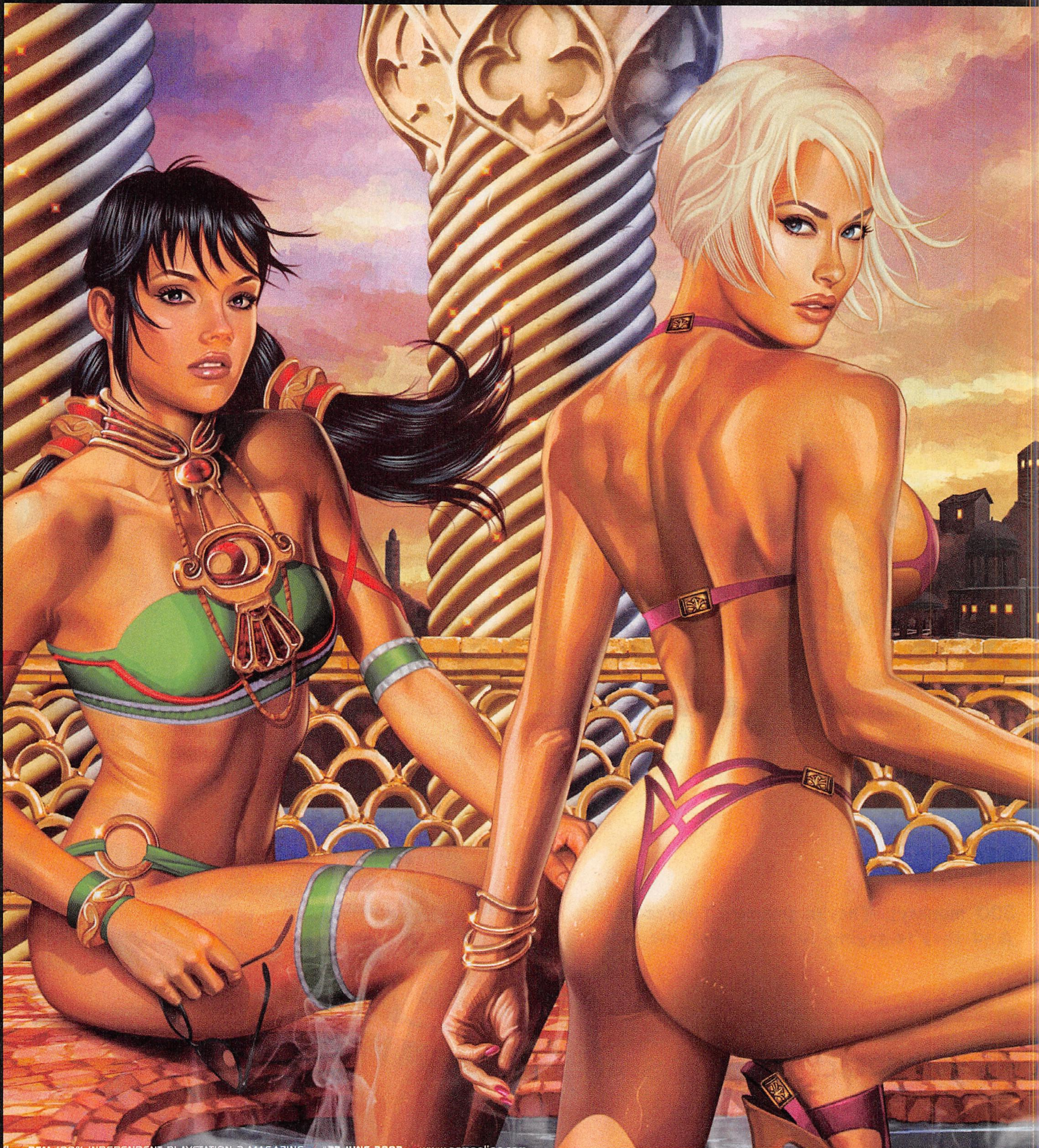
300 monkeys. They're smarter. They're zanier.
And they're trying to take over the world.

PlayStation®2



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SOUL SISTERS

Namco's sizzling sequel to *Soul Calibur* won't arrive until August, but let's get some introductions out of the way, shall we? From left to right, we've got Talim, Ivy, Xianghua, and Taki. Two months never seemed so long! Painting by Greg Horn



LOOKS THAT KILL

Dynasty Warrior 4's Sun Shang Xiang, and Ayame from *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven*, take a break from slaughtering hordes of enemy soldiers. After a long week of killing folks, you've just got to frolic in the woods on the weekend!

Painting by Jo Chen

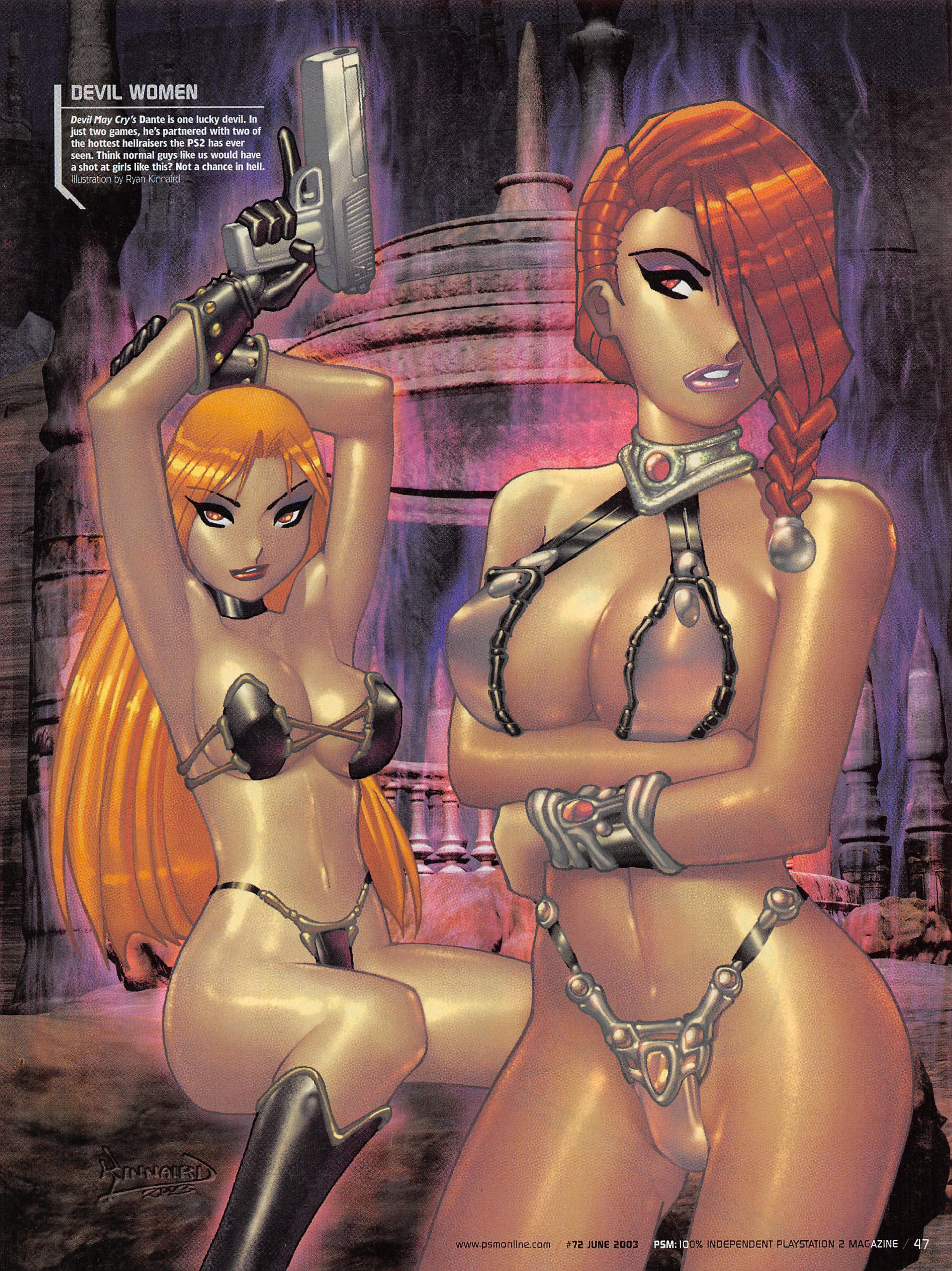


Jo Chen

DEVIL WOMEN

Devil May Cry's Dante is one lucky devil. In just two games, he's partnered with two of the hottest hellraisers the PS2 has ever seen. Think normal guys like us would have a shot at girls like this? Not a chance in hell.

Illustration by Ryan Kinnaird



MANEATER

The lovely Lara Croft may sulk around dank French alleys in her new game, but on our beach, she's left the killing behind for a little R&R... well, kind of. Illustration: Adam Hughes



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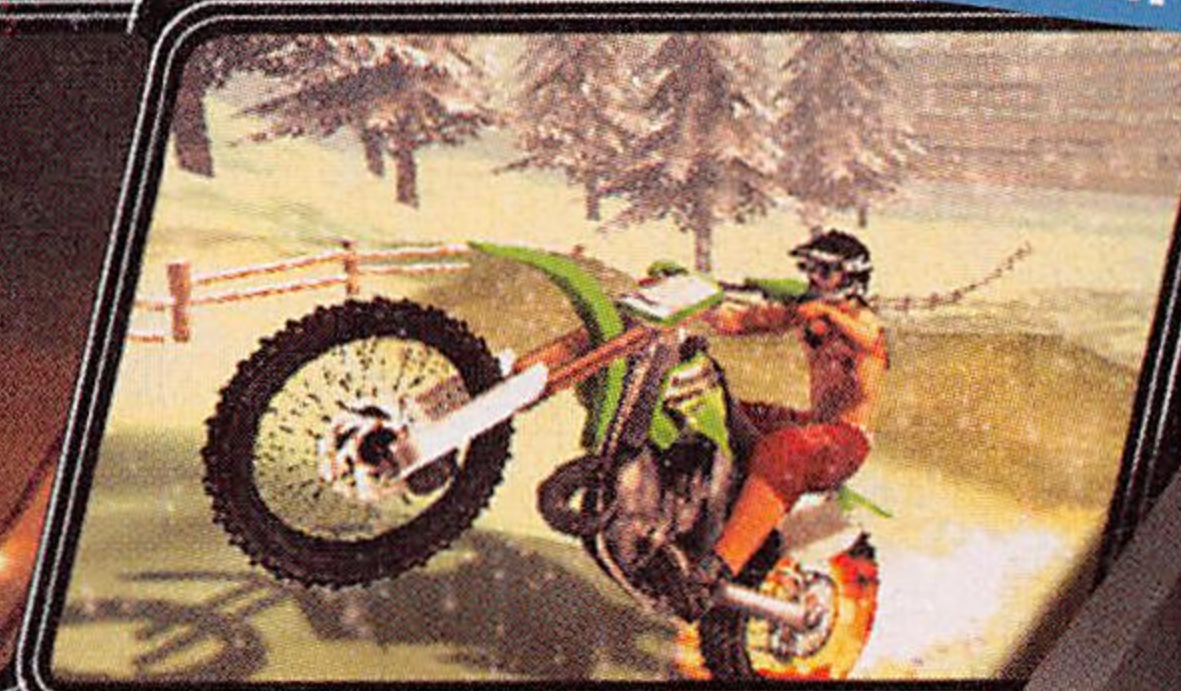
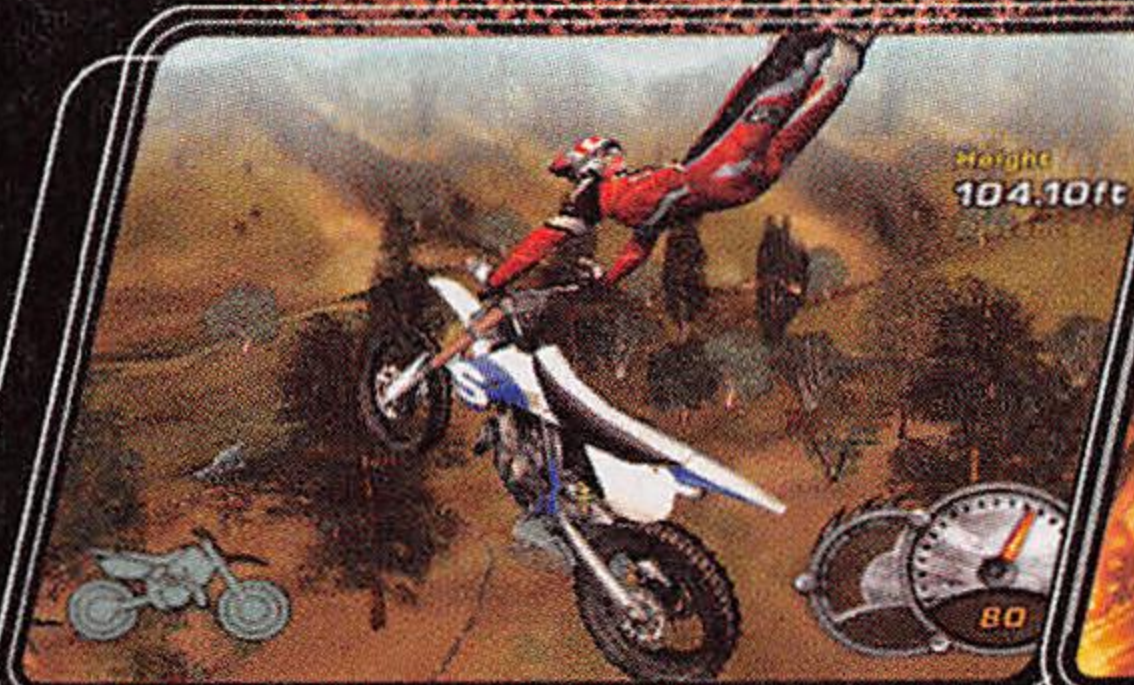
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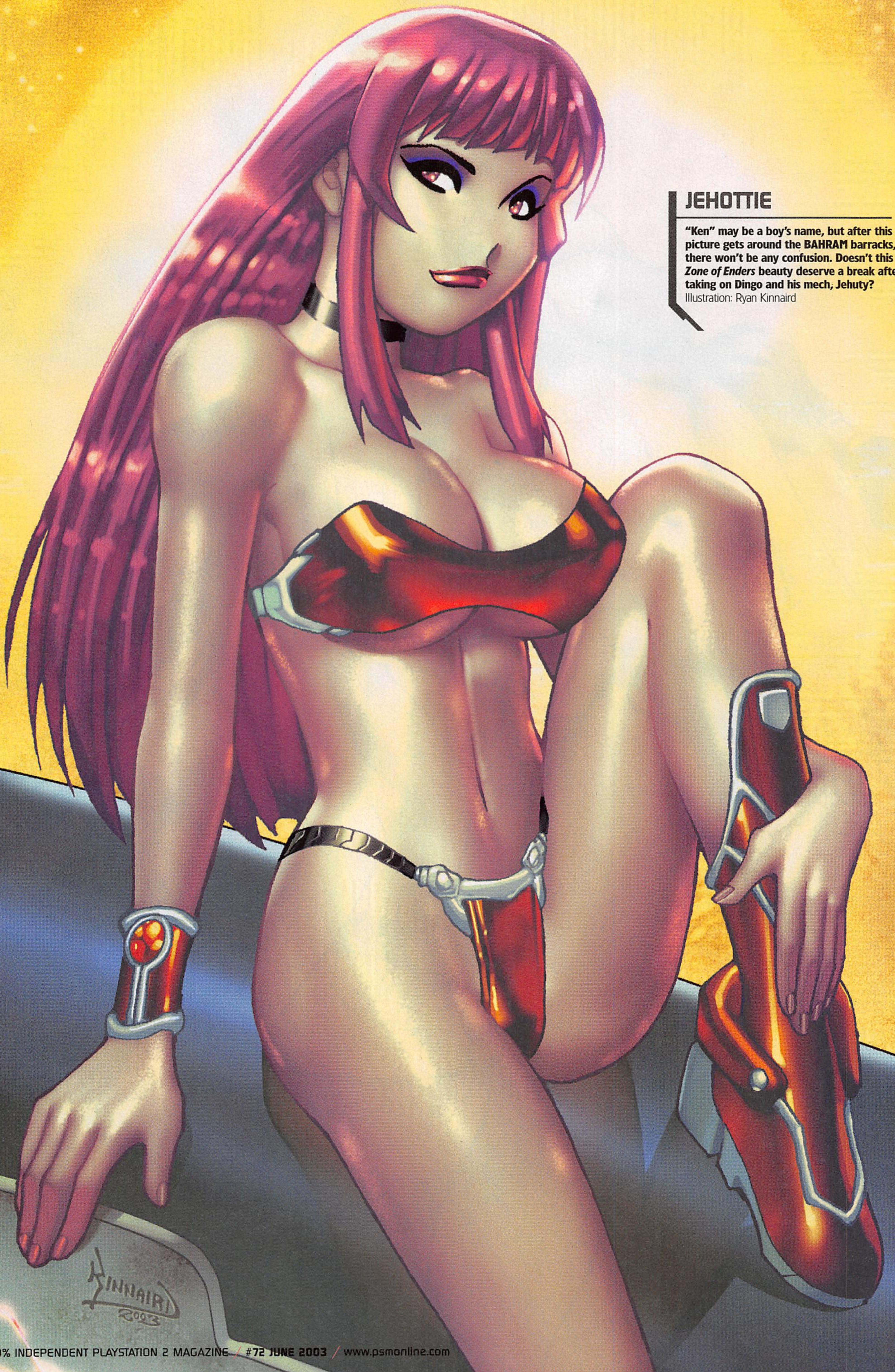


FEMME FATALES

There's no way in hell we'd ever go anywhere *near* these Fatality-loving females, but they sure are nice to look at. From left to right, we've got Frost, Sonya Blade, Nitara, Kitana, and Li Mei. Just remember: look, but don't touch!

Pencils/Inks: Kevin Lau; Colors: Charles Park

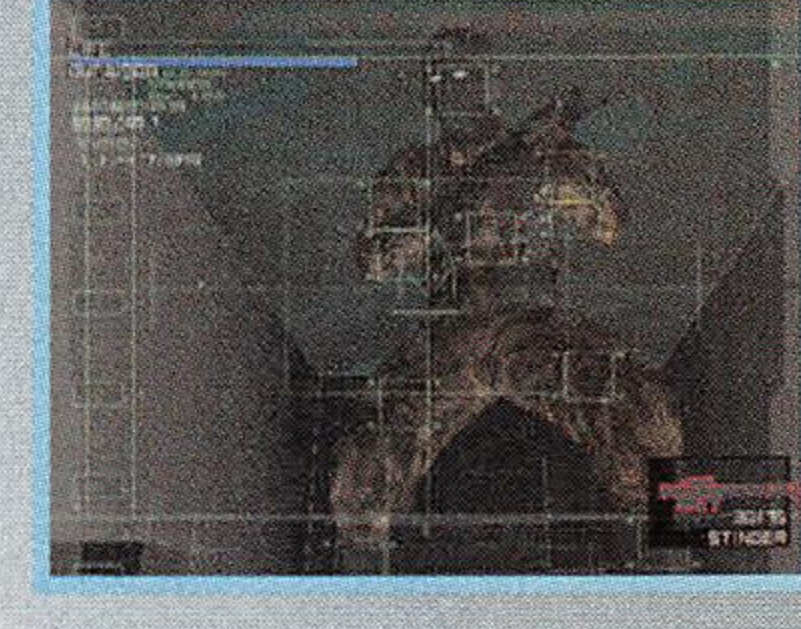
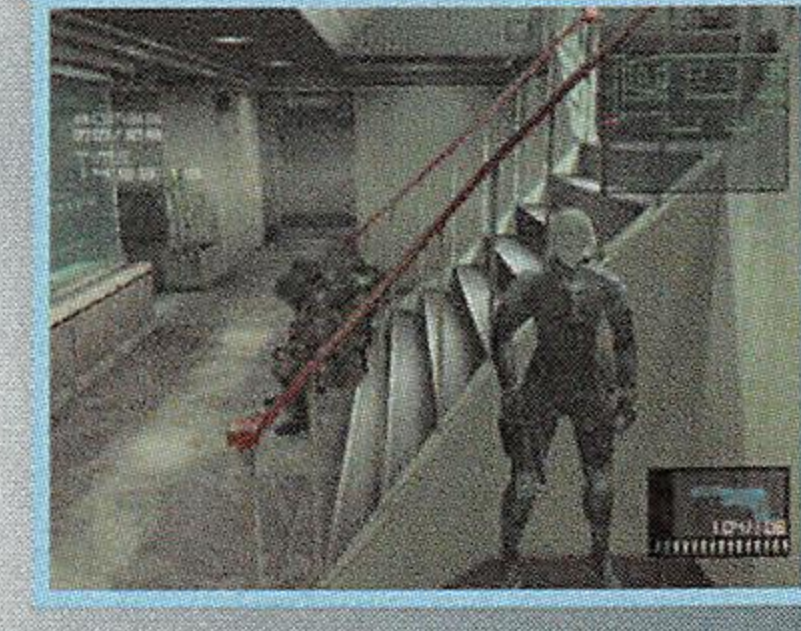
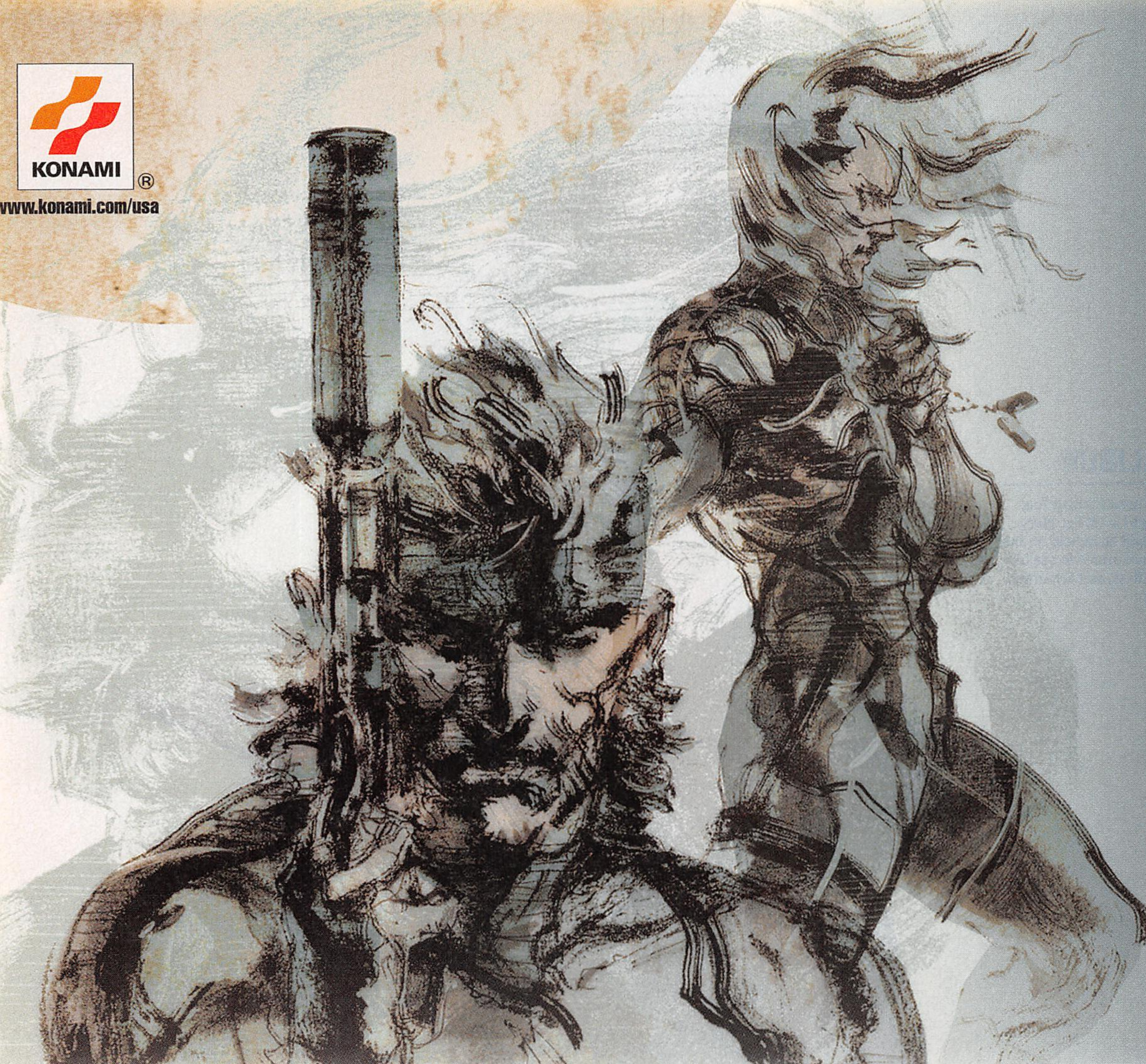




JEHOTTIE

"Ken" may be a boy's name, but after this picture gets around the BAHRAM barracks, there won't be any confusion. Doesn't this *Zone of Enders* beauty deserve a break after taking on Dingo and his mech, Jehuty?

Illustration: Ryan Kinnaird



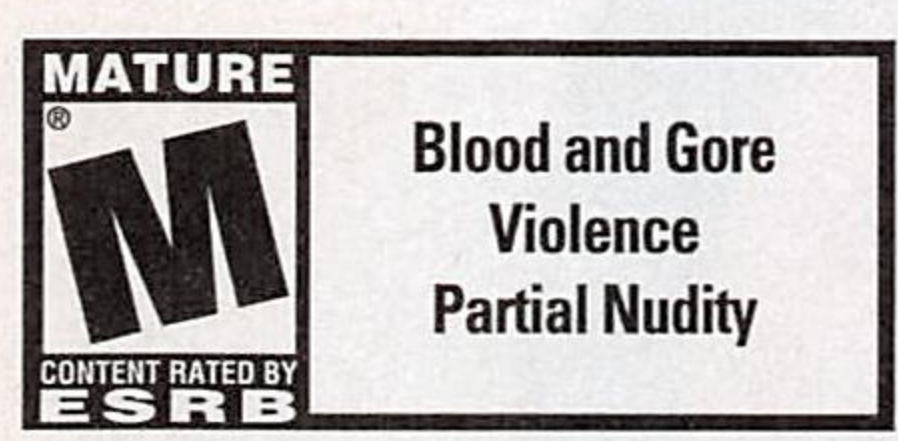
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HIGH CALIBUR

Once again, our breathtaking *Soul Calibur II* cover girl in all her glory. Cassandra is a sight to behold on the battlefield, but we prefer to see her swordless, shieldless, and armorless.

Painting: Greg Horn

Greg Horn



XENOGIRLS

Alien attackers are tough, but the biggest danger these girls face on a starship is cabin fever. It's high time that KOS-MOS and Shion tossed off those stuffy uniforms for some poolside R&R! Pencils/Inks: Adam Warren; Colors: Ryan Kinnaird



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バイバイ!

再见!

TA-TA
MATE!



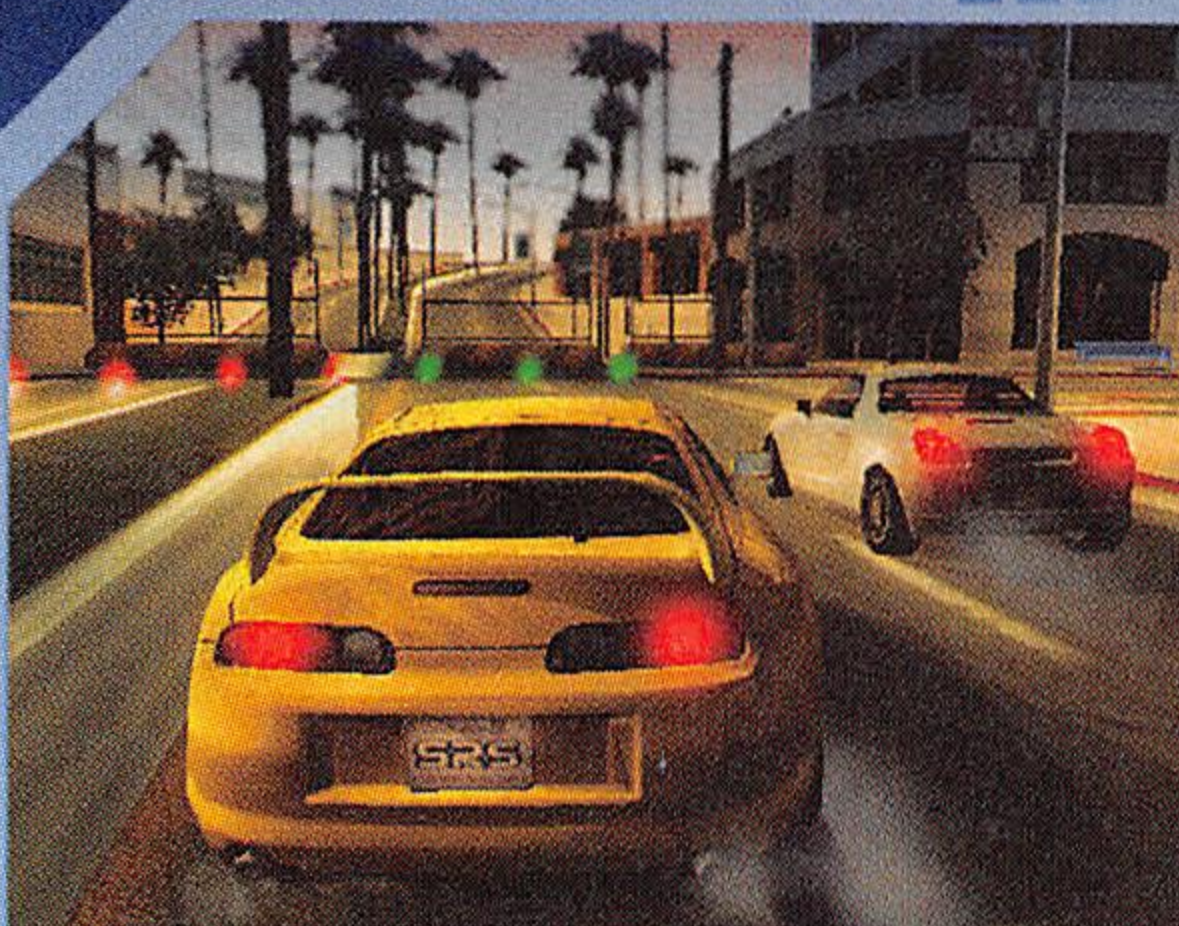
LOST LOVES

For our final piece, we wanted to envision what our favorite *Street Fighter* girls might be up to these days. Sakura, Chun Li and Cammy have been out of the spotlight for way too long—Capcom, give us guys a break and put these girls back in action soon! Pencils/Inks: Rick Mays; Colors: Guru EFX

猫
Rick M
03

GURU
EFX

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>> BET BIG! Win cash, cars, and the love of 18 of street racing's hottest honeys!



>> Outrun the cops on the streets of Miami, Philly, and L.A.

TUESDAY 10

Just touched down in L.A.

Picked up headers and an intake.

Gotta find a dyno.

WEDNESDAY 11

*I love rich kids.
They race for plinks and
can't even shift.*

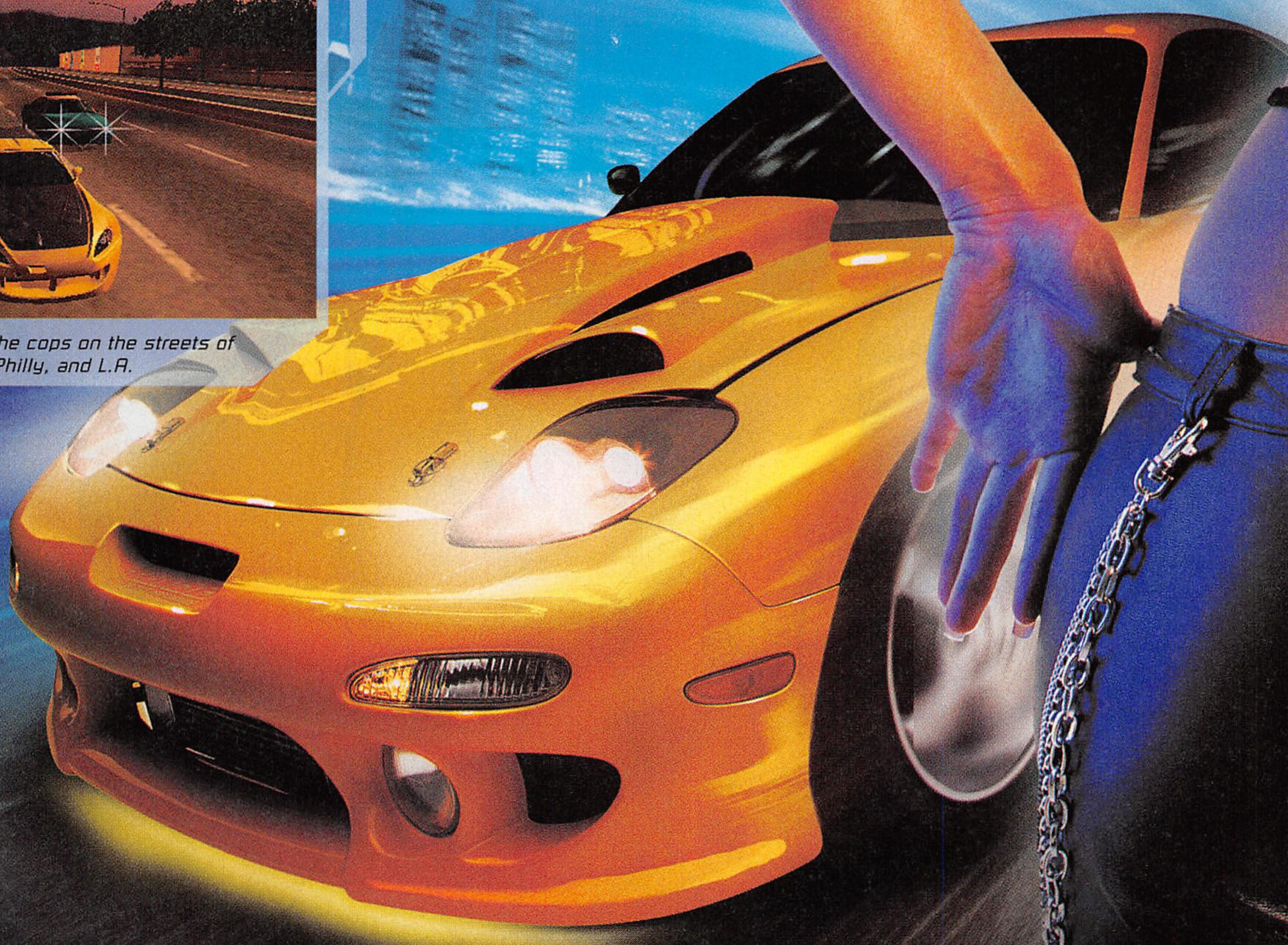
*Fools giving away their
girlfriends and their cash by
making me race.*

It's like delivery.

THURSDAY 12

*Back seats? Gone.
Aims? Tucked.
Body kit next week.
Turbocharger on my mind...*

*To Boost or not to Boost?
THAT is the Question...*



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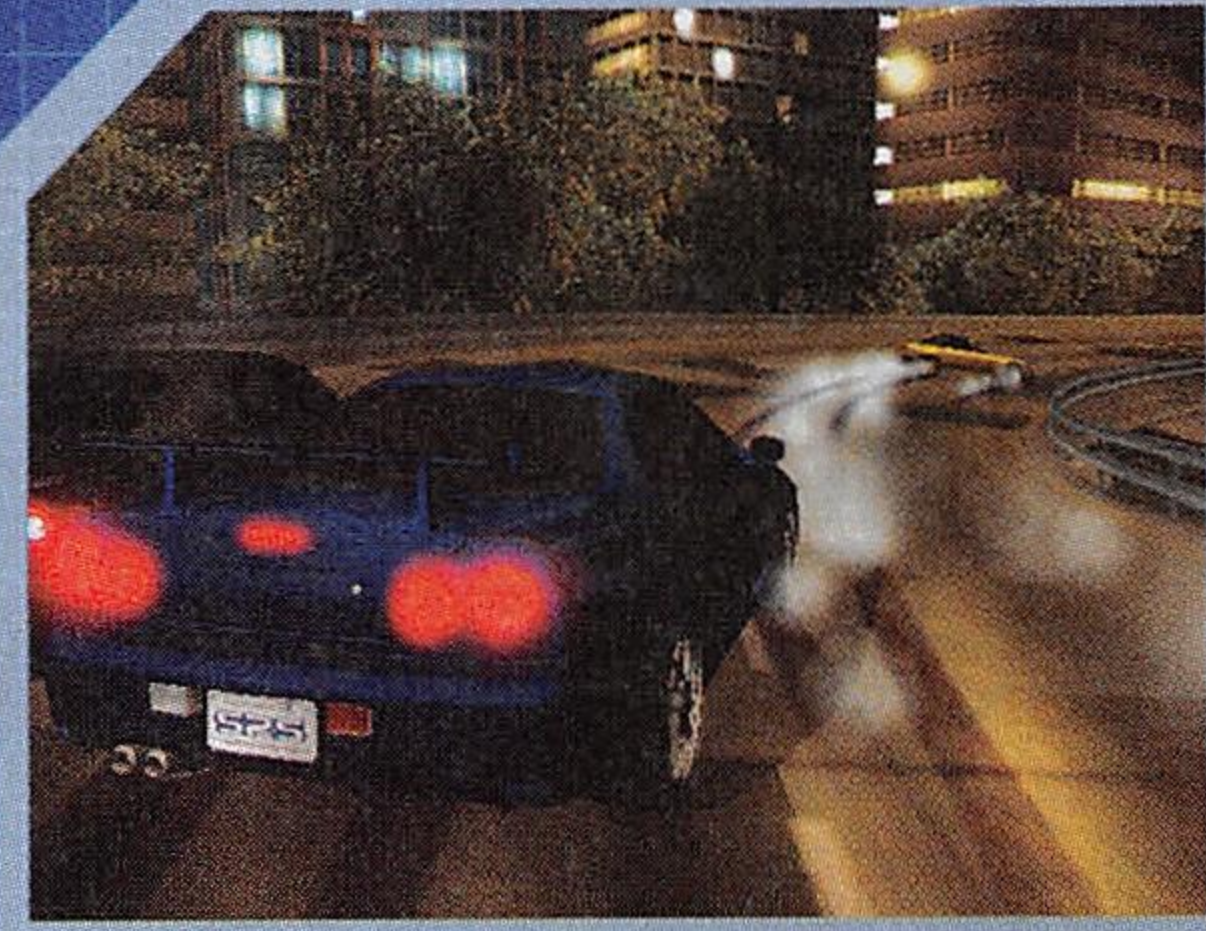


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FRIDAY 13

3 strikes. 2 cops. 6 gears.

One more ticket and
I trade in my license for
a bus pass.

Need nitrous.

SATURDAY 14

Hooked up nitrous. 100 shot.

Had to squeeze on a V8...
again. Just sad.

Now where did I put
Sasha's number?

SUNDAY 15

Last night, took Sasha
on the inside curve.

Tonight, she's taking me...





no arms. no legs. huge features.

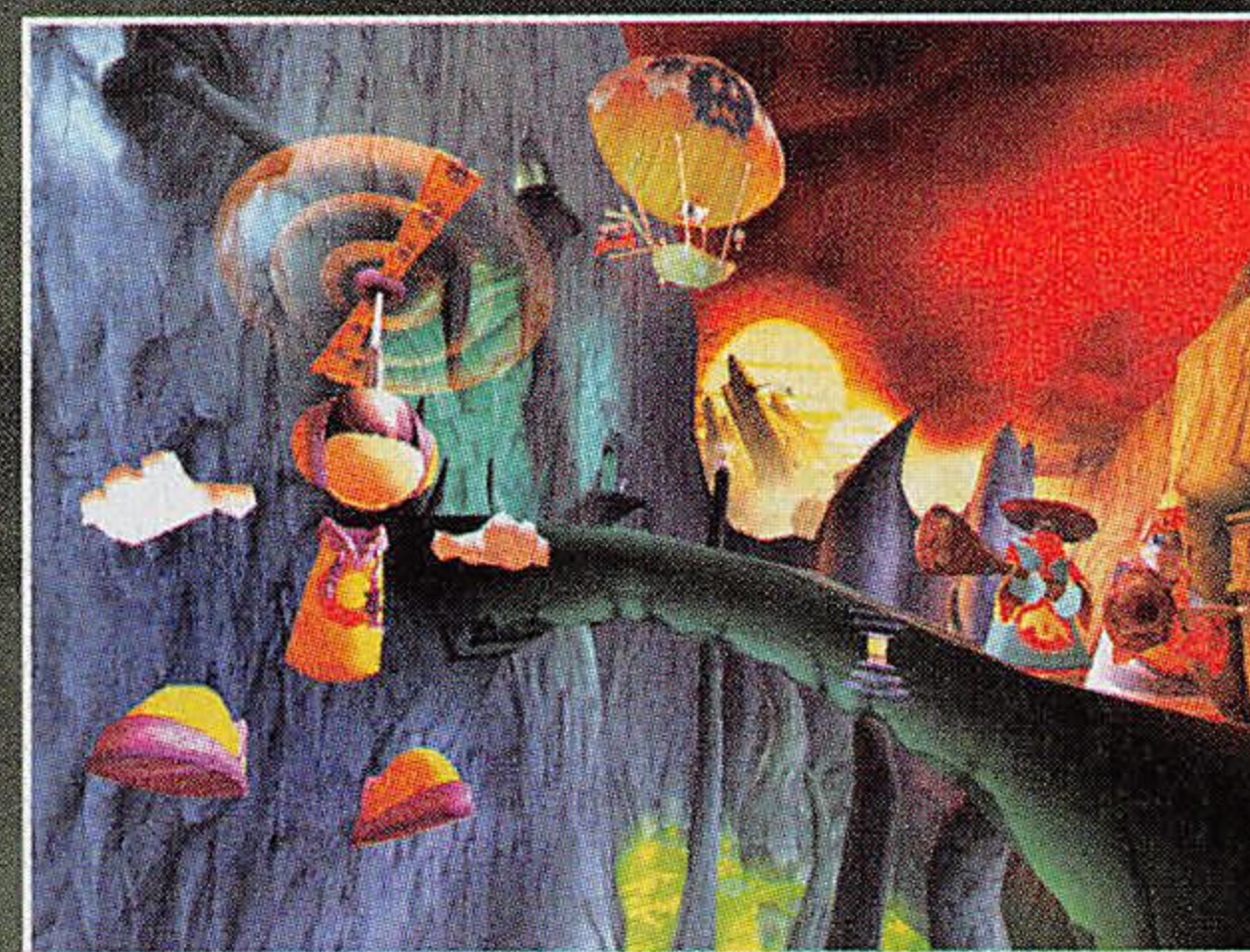
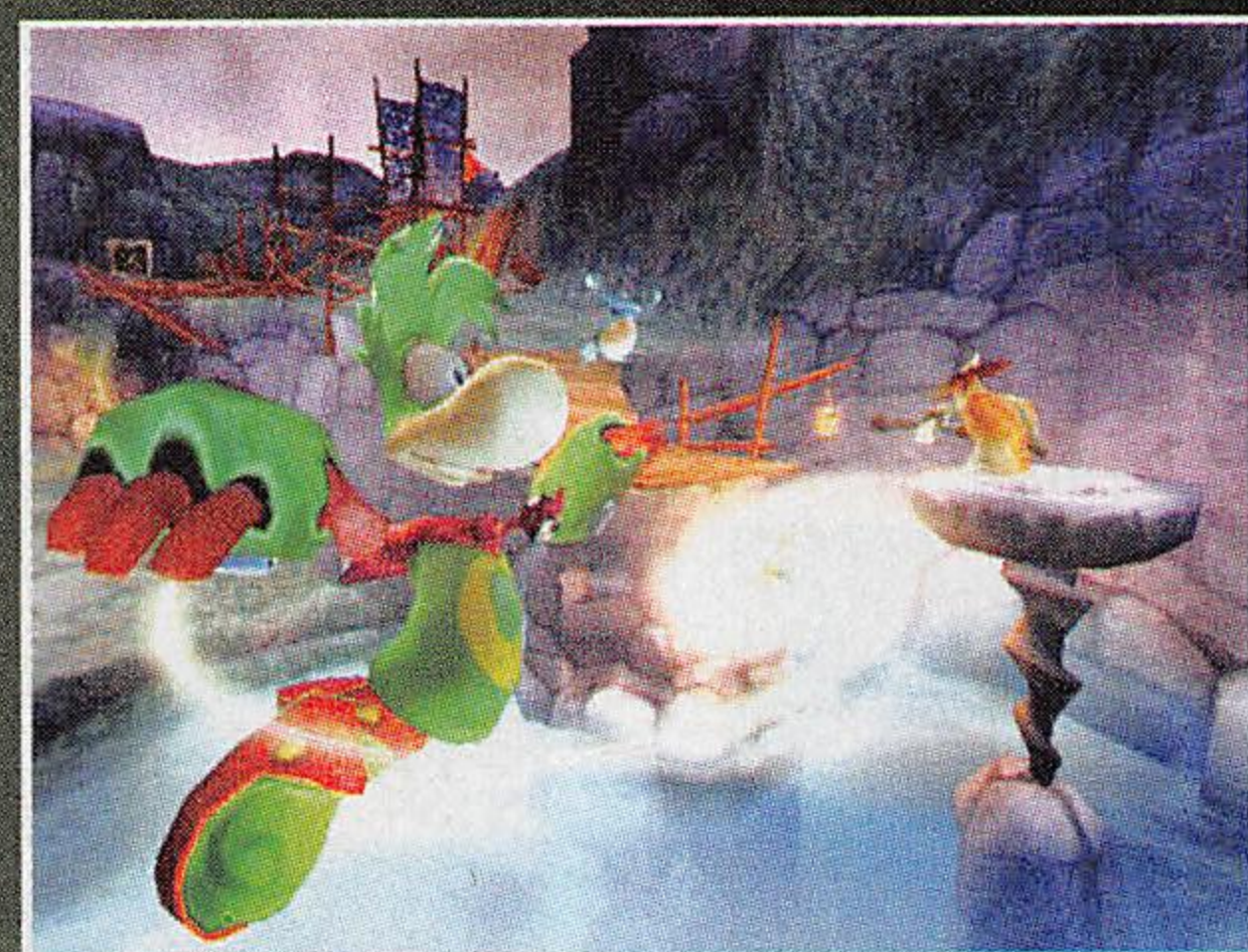
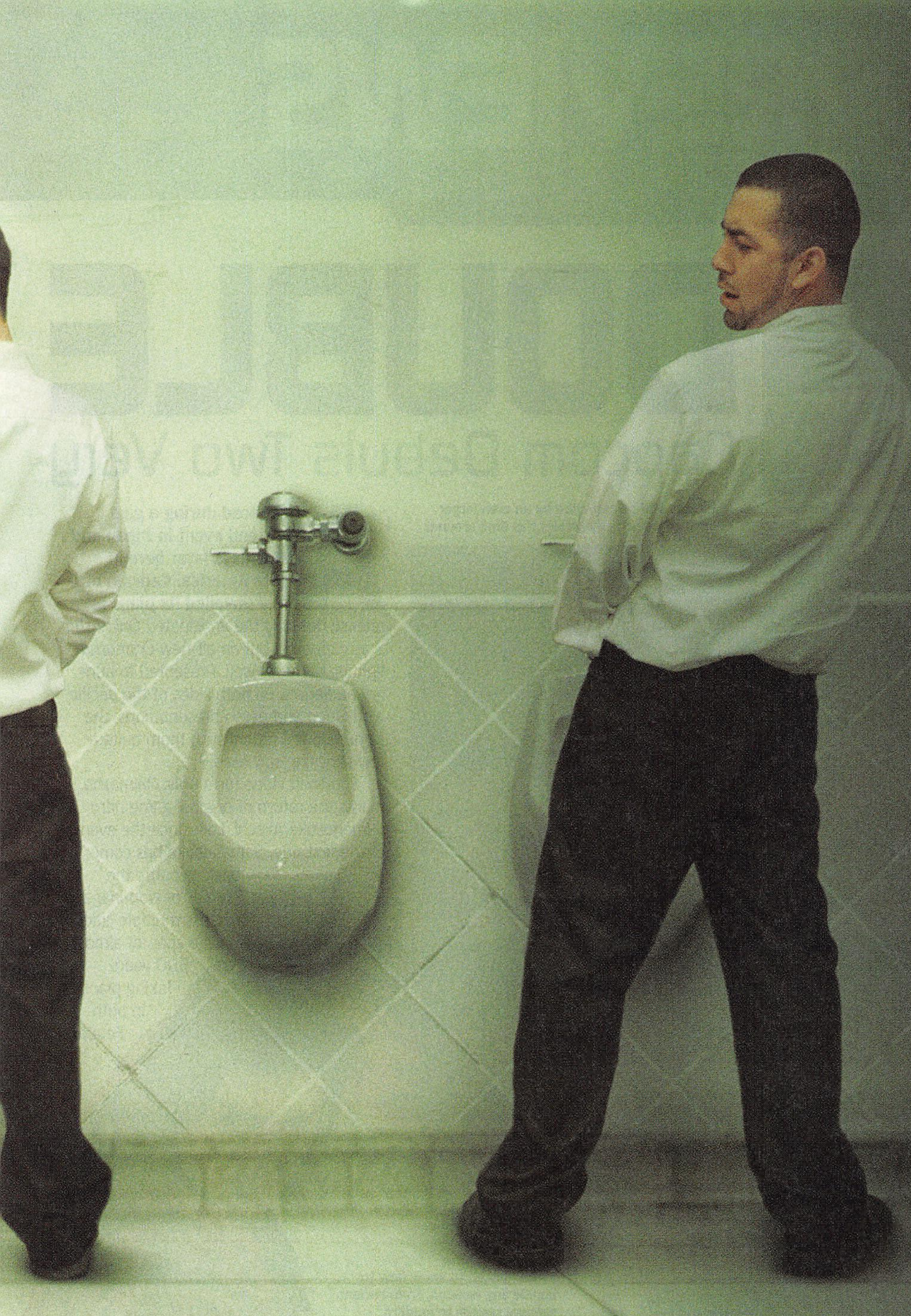


PlayStation®2



GAME BOY ADVANCE

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Official trailer
featuring "Madder"
by Groove Armada,
courtesy of Jive Records.



Violence
Comic Mischief



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HOT GAMES

Don't waste a second; turn on over to these big games NOW!



▲ Virtua Fighter 4: Evolution pg. 68



▲ Lord Of The Rings: ROTK pg. 72



▲ Syphon Filter: TOS pg. 76



▲ There's just something surreal about seeing Jean Reno appear in a game. He's... Leon!

DOUBLE

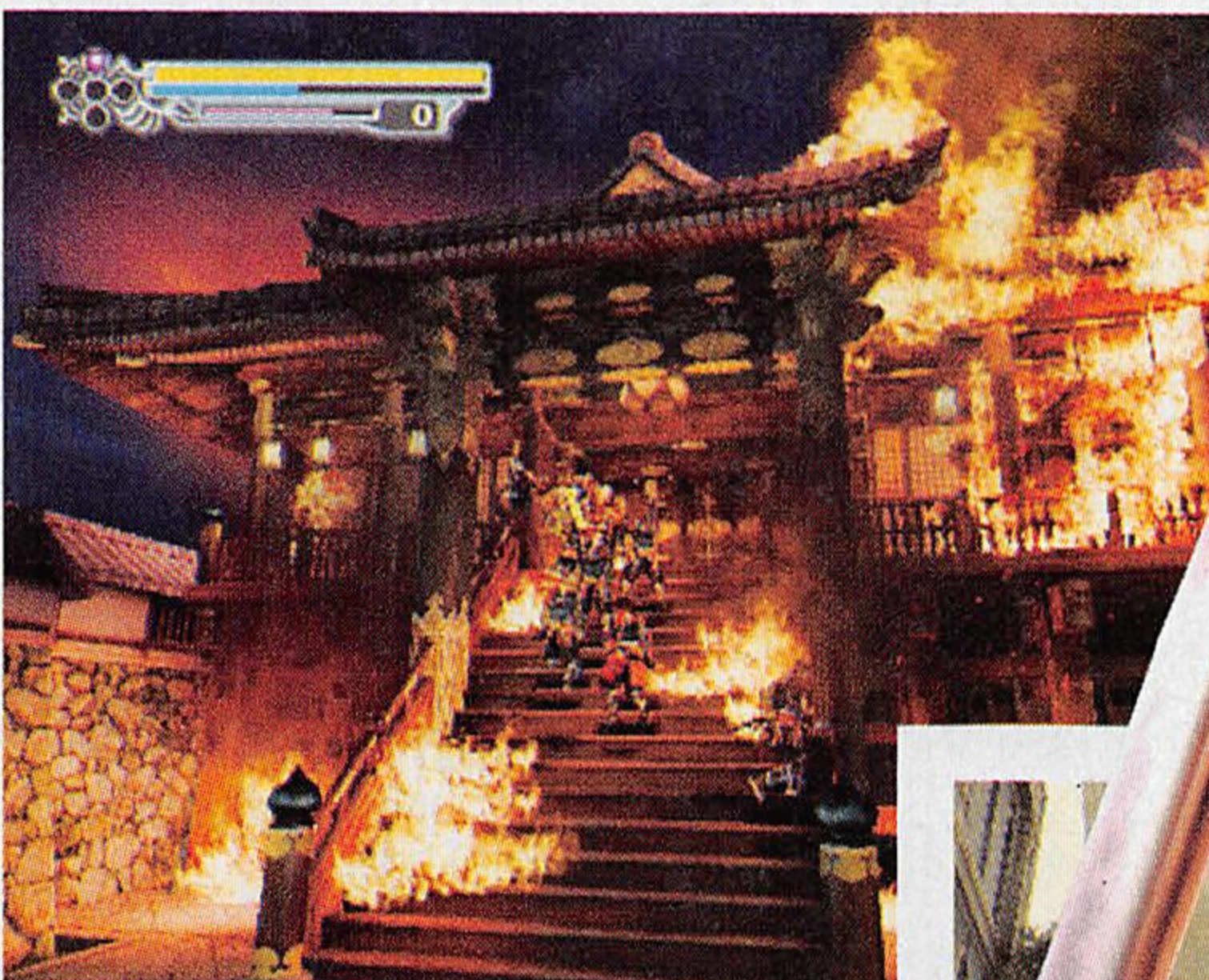
Capcom Debuts Two Very

▼ Players will be assaulted by an even larger number of on-screen enemies this time around.



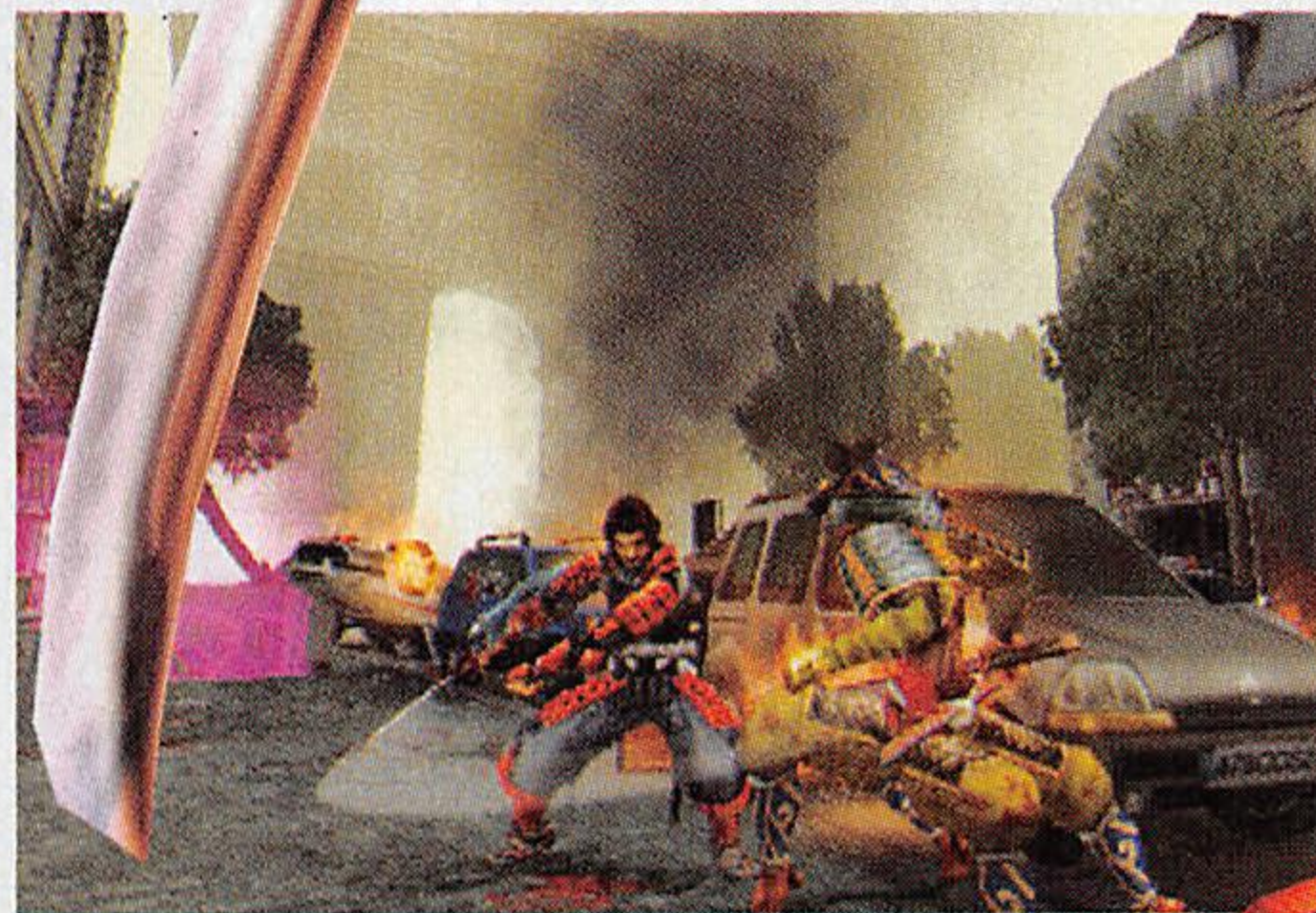
Anounced during a gala weekend event in Japan and a few days later here in North America, Capcom officially unveiled its plans to release not only the anticipated *Onimusha 3* as expected, but an all-new *Onimusha* fighting game as well. Presented to hungry audiences on both sides of the pacific with video and demo presentations, the samurai pair brought with them quite a few shocking surprises.

Shown in video form only, *Onimusha 3* marks the return of original game hero Samanosuke Akechi. Lost since the events of the first title, Samanosuke has come back to battle the forces of Nobunaga across multiple cities in a span of almost 500 years. Taking place in both Feudal



▲ This can't be a very good situation to be in: surrounded by enemies and about to be engulfed in fire. There aren't even any extinguishers around.

► Fighting through the streets of Paris is something that Samanosuke is definitely not used to. He's certainly a man out of his time and place.



► You'll need to know how to handle any weapon, from ancient samurai swords to modern semi-automatic handguns.

ONIMUSHA 3

GAME INFO / PUB/DEV CAPCOM / REL DATE SUMMER 2004 / TYPE ADV / MAX PLAYERS ONE / ESRB PENDING

<< FANS OF THE SERIES KNOW
THAT THE WAIT HAS ALWAYS
BEEN WORTH IT >>

ONIMUSHA

Different Onimusha Titles

Japan and 2004 Paris, French thespian Jean Reno joins Akechi as army officer "Jacques" as they struggle with an overwhelming horde of demons.

Gameplay details were pretty limited, but what we did find out was pretty promising. The backgrounds, for instance, are no longer pre-rendered and have been replaced with true 3D polygonal environments. Additionally, characters can finally be controlled with the analog stick instead of the digital pad, and some of the new weapons include a chain-whip type extender and handheld firearms of varying calibers. There are even a couple of sections of the

trailer that hint at the ability to travel between time zones freely and the possibility of driving a motorcycle.

That aside, one could argue that the biggest surprise of the event wasn't the modern-day setting of *Onimusha 3*, but the revelation that there would be a fighting game to go along with it. Tentatively titled *Onimusha Buraiden*, Capcom's *Power Stone*-inspired brawler practically floored us. Using characters from the previous two games (Jubei, Samanosuke, and various minions and bosses, to name a few), the four-player fighting will make use of the multitap and take place on multiple planes.

Unfortunately, we only got to see the two-player game instead of four, as Capcom's multitap had gone faulty before the event, but we'll have plenty of opportunities to check it out for ourselves as we lead up to its expected release next spring. *Onimusha 3*, with all its departures from tradition, should slash

Four Can Play

With its *Powerstone*-inspired design, *Buraiden* will also allow up to four players to duke it out with a various assortment of weapons. You have to have a multitap, though.



▲ Some of the Onimusha-inspired stages have only one level, while others have multiple, which adds to the multiplayer strategy.

its ways into stores sometime around the summer of 2004. It's a long wait, for sure, but fans of the series know that the wait has always been worth it. We just want to play as Jean Reno!

JEREMY DUNHAM/STEPHEN FROST



▲ Your life will depend on your skill with the blade!



ONIMUSHA: BURAIKEN

GAME INFO / PUB/DEV CAPCOM | REL DATE SPRING | TYPE FIGHTING | MAX PLAYERS FOUR | ESRB RATING PENDING

▼ Not content with the fight in the past game, both Ivy and Cervantes have returned to continue their epic struggle once again.

GAME INFO

PUB/DEV NAMCO | REL DATE AUGUST | TYPE FIGHTING | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB RATING TEEN



SOUL CALIBUR II

We take on Namco's amazing weapon-based fighter



▲ The classic trail effects are back, but seem to be a bit more noticeable. Maybe it's due to the brighter colors used.



▲ Some of the third-player costumes are definitely more casual. Check out Mitsurugi's lounging wear.

O riginally debuting on the PlayStation, the *Soul Blade* series (*Soul Edge* in Japan) hasn't been seen on a Sony console

since 1997. That's especially surprising, as all of its various incarnations and sequels were developed on PS-compatible arcade hardware.

Unfortunately, that didn't prevent the first sequel, *Soul Calibur*, from heading exclusively to the ill-fated Dreamcast. Now, though, PlayStation 2 owners are finally going to get their due with the release of *Soul Calibur II*. Over the next few pages, we'll go

hands-on on this long awaited sequel and share with you our opinions on why it's one of the finest weapon-based fighters out there.

The Eyes Have It

There's no denying that the Dreamcast version of the original *Soul Calibur* was a night and day improvement over its arcade "twin." The sheer leap in graphical quality was a sight to behold, and the same thing can be said of *Soul Calibur II*... sort of. There are some rather impressive improvements indeed, but the initial overall package comes off as slightly less

amazing when you compare it to the DC title. Spend some time with the game, though, and you'll almost assuredly notice all the new little details that eventually shine through. Higher polygonal counts in both the characters and backgrounds, greater detail in all the textures, a further draw-distance, and improved weather effects are only a few bits of the icing that make this sequel so sweet. Adding to that is the fact that *SCII* supports progressive-scan (525p) output, which makes owning an HD-compatible TV all the more rewarding. All in all, *SCII* definitely leads the pack



when it comes to good-looking fighting games.

Deeper And Better

As with *Virtua Fighter 4 Evolution*, the fighting system in *SCII* hasn't changed that dramatically since the last game, but it has evolved quite a bit and absorbed a few ideas from other titles. Despite the addition of numerous new attacks, the overall combat is actually much easier to get into. Yet, it's also far deeper in its intricacies and strategy. The core fundamental of Guard Impact, which is when you counter an opponent's attack (← + Guard or → + Guard), has been given a bigger window of opportunity, allowing for more back and forth gameplay. You won't always feel the need to be so defensive this time around. Along with the other obvious character balancing tweaks, there's also been a focus placed on wall defense and attack recoveries. Now, more than ever, players will have more options when knocked up into the air, or down on the ground. Lastly, the arsenal of moves for each of the characters has been decently upgraded, with a larger variety of combinations and varying range attacks thrown in for good measure.

Weapon Master

While the selection of game modes is varied, with something for everyone, the true meat and potatoes of this combat experience would have to be the Weapon Master mode. Modeled after the Mission Mode in the last game, Weapon Master challenges the player with over 100 different challenges, ranging from simple one-on-one fights to ring-out only situations.



▲ Raphael may think he's all that, but Ivy is about to dish him out a major plate of pain.

<< THE FIGHTERS FACE A GRUESOME QUEST TO SEARCH FOR THE ULTIMATE SWORD >>

You'll even find yourself going, room by room, through various dungeons as you attempt to find the Boss. With each victory, you'll earn experience points and money which can be used to acquire new weapons and unlock bonus features.

Bonuses Galore

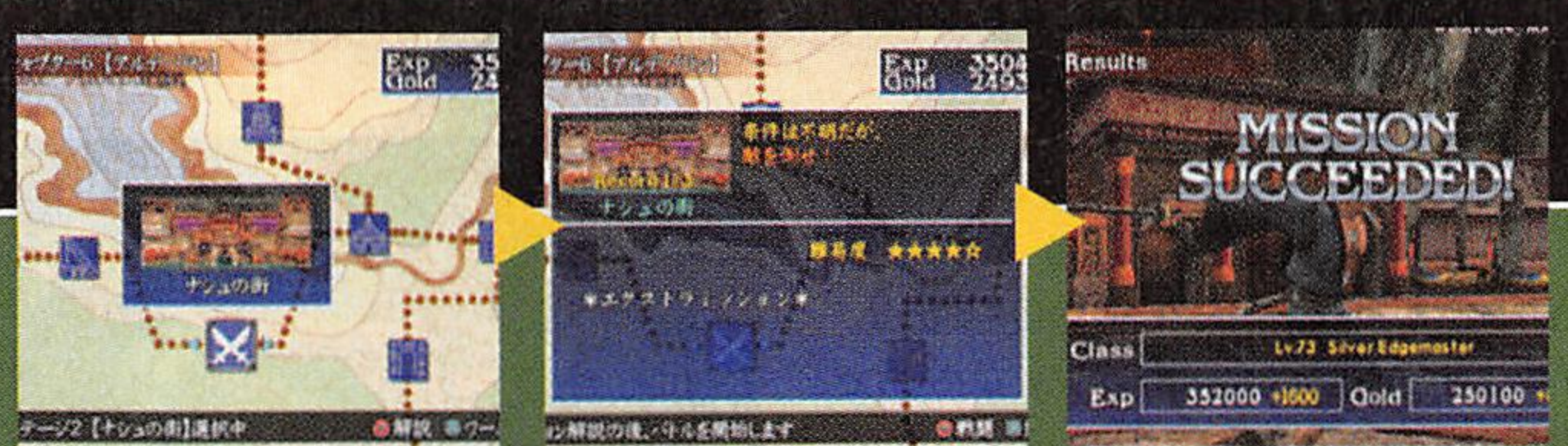
Namco has always done a great job in their arcade conversions, and it seems that *SCII* is no exception. There is a bounty of unlockable extras, ranging from additional modes and bonus weapons to hidden characters and high-res artwork. Overall, there



▲ Mitsurugi has always been our favorite character, but the zaniness of Yoshimitsu is always entertaining.

Weapon Master Extraordinaire

The Mission Mode from the original *Soul Calibur* has been further improved with a larger number of challenges and unlockable items. The flaming rats haven't returned, but we guess you can't have everything.



▲ With over 100 different missions to complete, this is one mode that will take you days, if not weeks, to finish. In a lot of cases, you'll have to defeat opponents in very special ways.

PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action



► Charade resembles the Edge Master, as he can mimic all the other characters' moves and attacks.

▼ Backgrounds are far more detailed, with a greater variety among them. They all look very different and unique.

▲ Being able to Guard Impact more easily means that you won't have to be on the defensive so much this time around. Yeah!

► MAXI

► RAPHAEL

► NIGHTMARE

▲ MITSURUGI

▲ TAKI

Compare And Contrast

The visual difference between the Dreamcast conversion of *Soul Calibur* and the newest PS2 version of *SCII* may not seem that major. A closer look reveals an improved level of detail in both the characters and the backgrounds.



▲ *Soul Calibur*



▲ *Soul Calibur II*

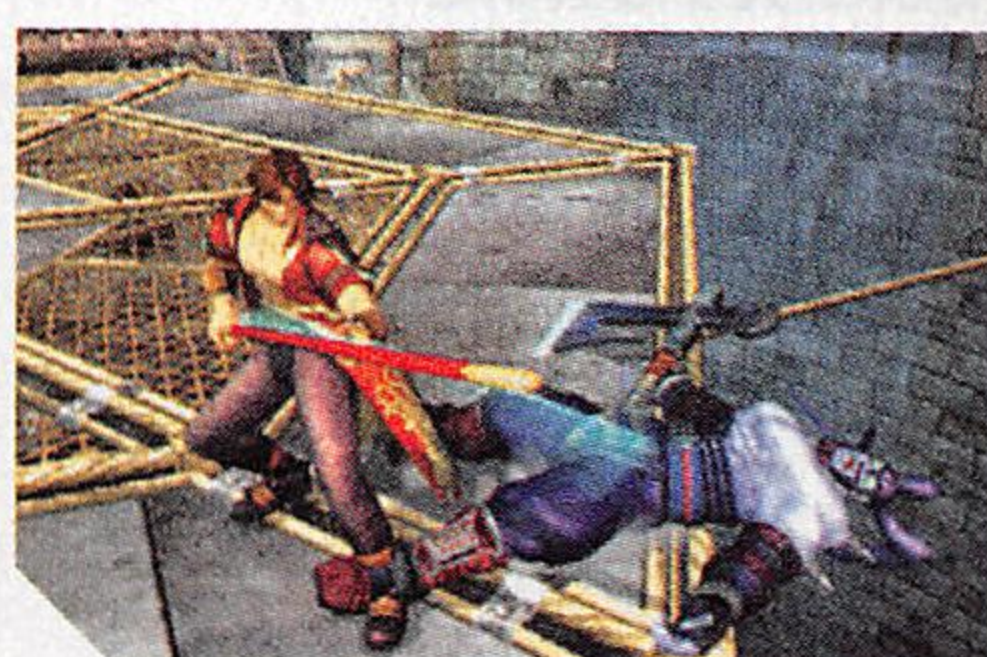
may not be as many hidden items as in *VF4 Evo*, but the ones here are often more impressive. That's especially true when you consider that there are well over 200 weapons to find, alone. Throw in the extra backgrounds, character katas and profiles, and you'll definitely be busy discovering new things for weeks on end. It simply doesn't seem to get any better than this, as far as the single-player experience goes.

The Soul Still Burns

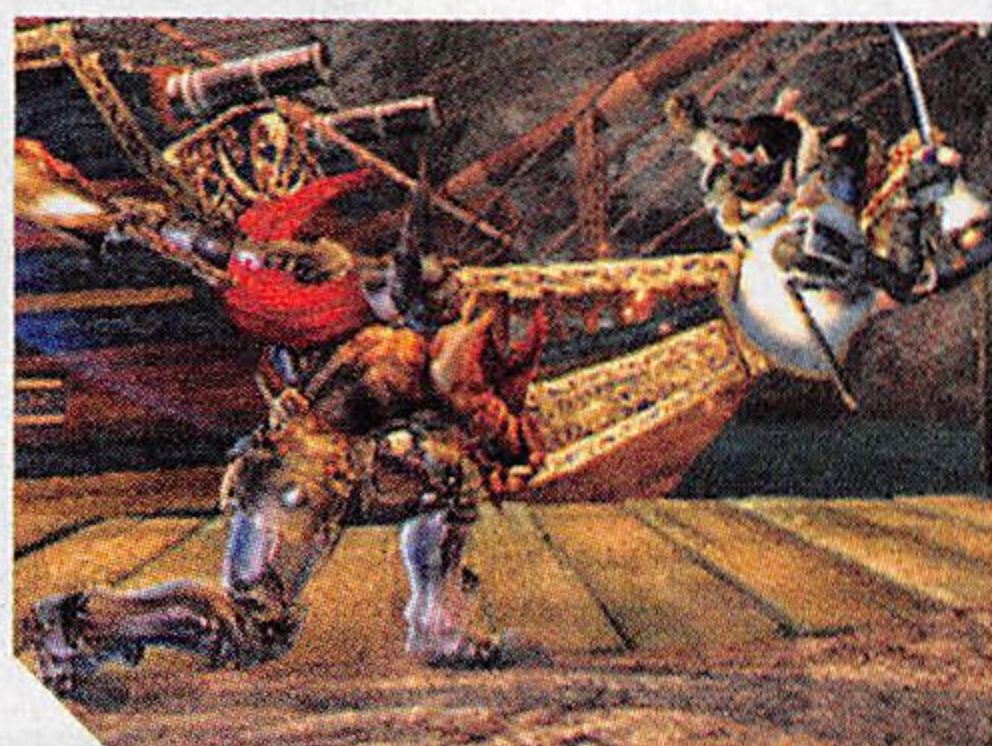
While the U.S. release of *Soul Calibur II* is still several months away, our time with the Japanese version has only further whetted our appetites. Over the next few issues, we'll definitely be covering the game a lot, especially when the first U.S. screenshots start to surface. We'll also be going more in-depth on the gameplay and how it compares to the other fighters out there. Until then, grab your katana and start practicing. The stage of destiny awaits. **STEPHEN FROST**



▲ The ghost pirate, Cervantes, may not have much personality, but he's definitely loud with his two blades.



▲ Knocking your opponent out of the ring is still the quickest way to victory. Just be careful they don't do it to you.



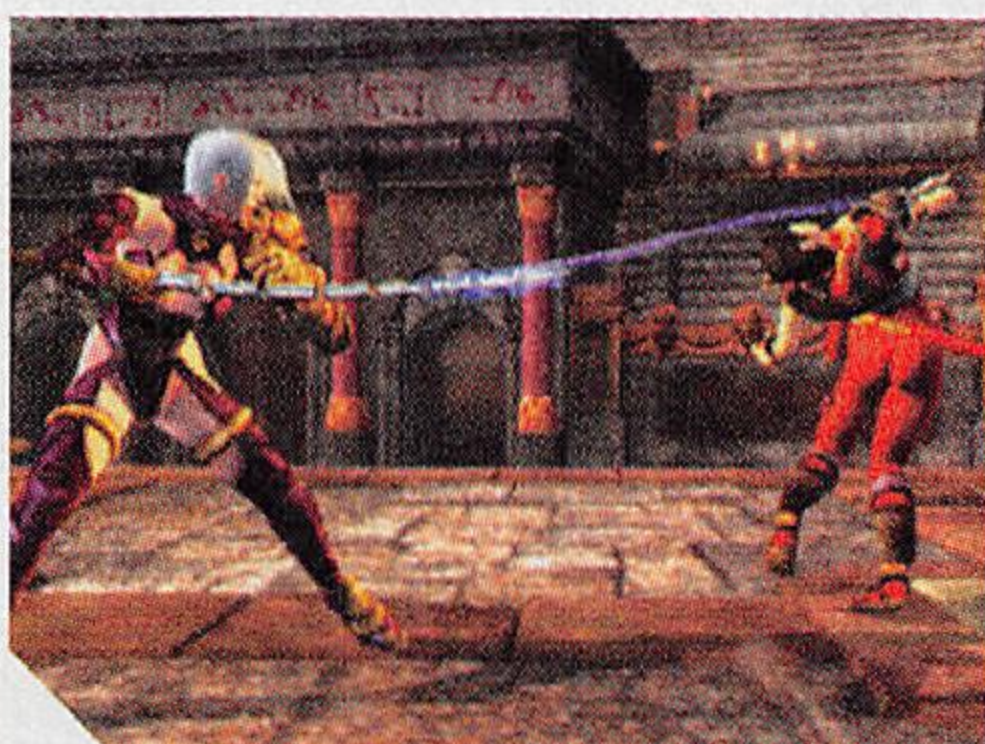
▲ While Nightmare is a bit of a brute, he's still pretty quick and can normally catch characters off their feet.



▲ Yoshimitsu is no longer the only *Tekken* character to appear in *Soul Calibur*. Now, Heihachi has defected as well.



▲ More so than before, the backgrounds have a much larger variety to them.



▲ Ivy's sword can be quite deceptive, because it's hard to gauge how far it can really reach.

The Stages of History

Now in its third iteration, the *Soul Blade* series first started in the arcades but has now expanded to appear on all three current consoles. What will the next game be like?



▲ *Soul Blade* (PS) - 1997

▲ *Soul Calibur* (DC) - 1999

▲ *Soul Calibur II* (PS2) - 2003



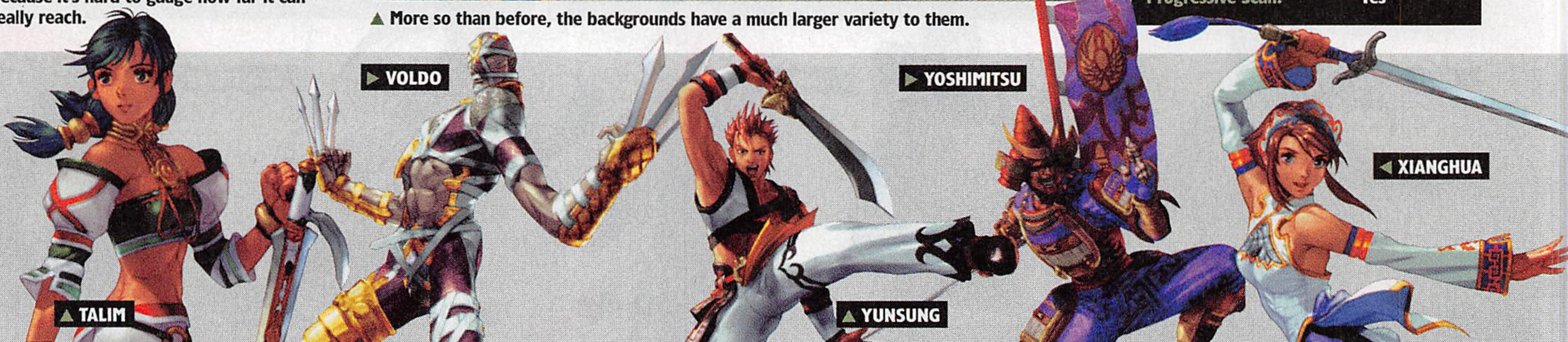
▲ The two main babes of *SCII* duke it out to see who gets to date Heihachi. Apparently, he's even dreamier than Sean Connery.



▲ Necrid was created specifically for this game by the folks at Todd McFarlane Productions (of *Spawn* fame).

At A Glance

Characters:	21
Modes:	21
Unlockable Items:	300+
Progressive Scan:	Yes



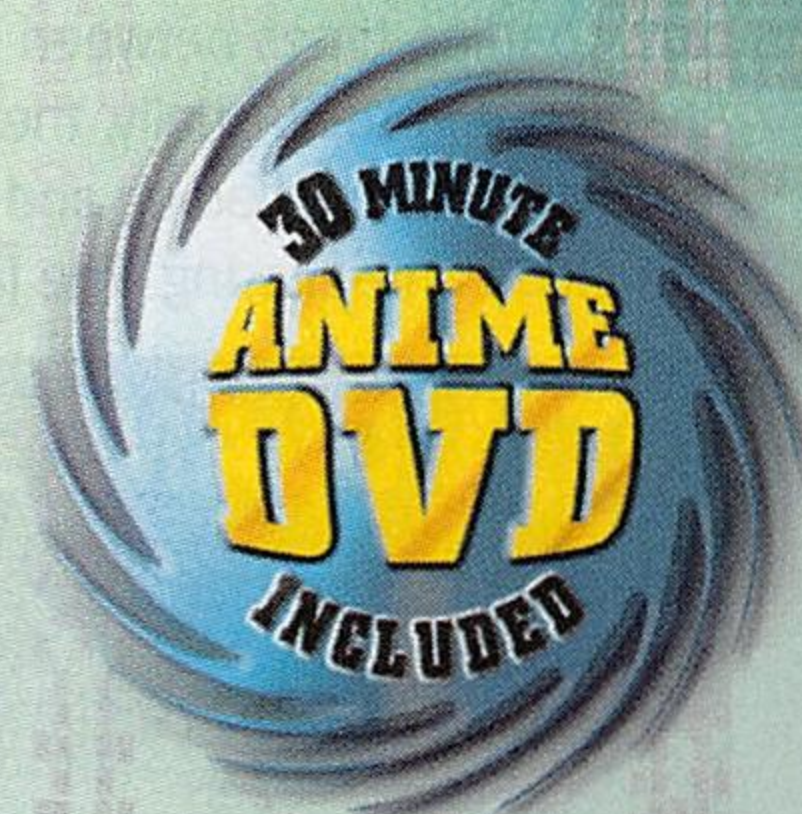
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GAME INFO | PUB SEGA | DEV SEGA (AM2) | TYPE FIGHTING | REL DATE AUGUST | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB RATING TEEN



▲ Returning VF4 character Vanessa shows Brad that it's not easy being the new fighter on the block. He'll definitely have to pay his dues.

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4: The VF series takes an evolutionary leap

The latest title in Yu Suzuki's acclaimed fighting series, *Virtua Fighter 4 Evolution* may have had its roots in the arcades, but it looks like it's going to take its release on the PlayStation 2 to truly show fans how much of an upgrade it really is. It's only been recently that we've received word of the game's U.S. release, but that doesn't mean we haven't been eagerly anticipating it.

Our Japanese version of the game reveals that *Evolution* is superior to the original VF4 in every conceivable way. Loading times between matches are all but gone. Visually, the game features deeper shading and enhanced anti-aliasing. The jagged

edges that irked some fans of the series are history, and touches that were apparently beyond the power of the PS2—like a hologram logo on the back of Jacky's jacket—are everywhere.

In addition to one of the deepest fighting systems ever, gamers now have several extra modes of play to choose from, many of which must be unlocked. Knockdown Clash and Wall Death Match inflict damage if players hit the floor or the walls, a Survival Tournament pits players against a course of unrelenting attackers, See-Saw mode has players sharing a single lifebar, Iron Fight gives players 1,000 points of health and infinite time, Counter Challenge inflicts counter attack damage on every

strike, and Hyper Action Battle is a button-masher's dream, as attacks have no recovery time.

Unfortunately, *Evolution* doesn't support the use of the PS2's second memory card slot, meaning that fighting die-hards can't customize their characters and use them against their friends. However, this may be corrected in the localized release. Other than that minor complaint, though, it seems to us that Sega has done a bang-up job on this upgrade. We're not sure what other changes, if any, there will be in the U.S. version, but we'll definitely keep fighting fans updated over the next few months.

DOUG TRUEMAN/STEPHEN FROST

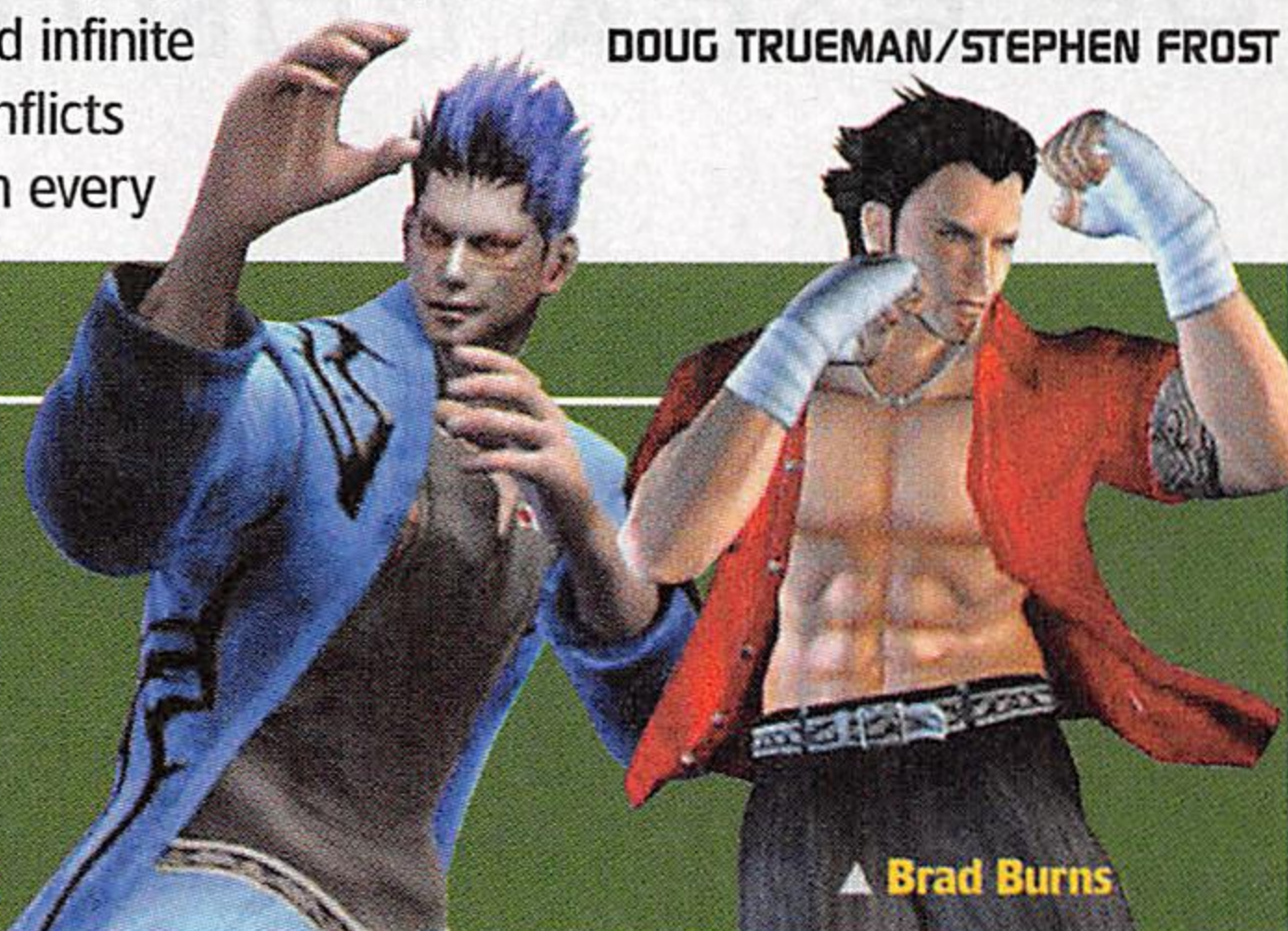
AT A GLANCE

- Characters: 16
- Modes: 14
- Unlockable Items: 1500+
- Progressive Scan: No

The New Guys

Evolution adds two new characters to the *Virtua Fighter* pantheon. Brad Burns is a Muay Thai kickboxing expert, and Goh Hinogami has a black belt in Judo.

► Gou Hinogami



▲ Brad Burns

Virtua Fighter Quest?

VF4's Kumite Mode, a virtual arcade which sent a stream of endless CPU opponents against players, has been replaced with *Evolution's* Quest Mode. There are now well over 1,500 articles to unlock to customize fighters with, including bracelets, hairpieces, shaved heads, axes, panda bears, designer jackets, dozens of high-resolution wallpaper images, as well as the original *Virtua Fighter 1* character models. Some items are awarded after winning a random challenge match, while others can be purchased after earning gold pieces in a fight.



▲ You'll get to travel all around Japan, taking on the best *Virtua Fighter* players in the world.



▲ Goh shows Shun that he's not going to take it easy on anyone. He's out to take Akira out of the top spot.



▲ Being a kickboxer, Brad has no problems with kneeing Lion right in the crotch.

THE BUZZ

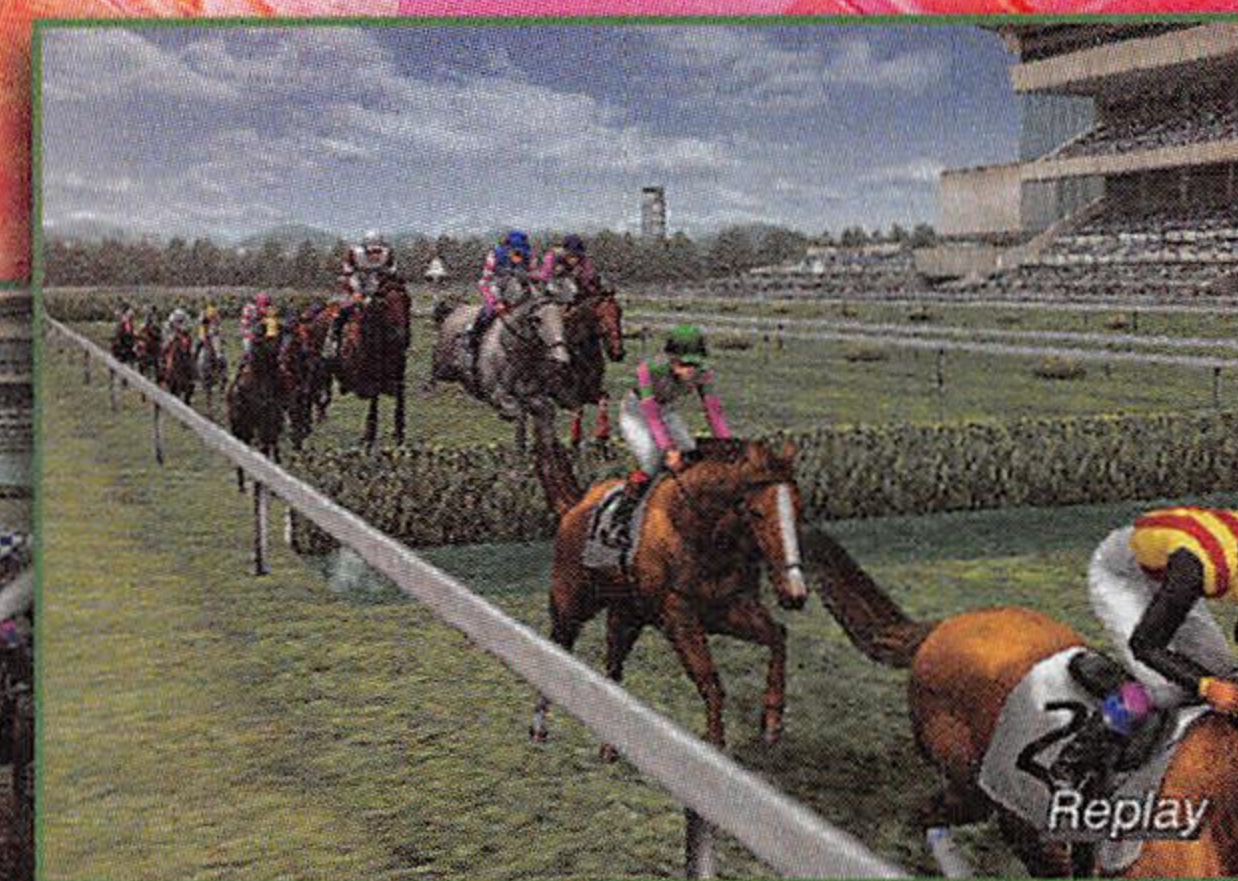
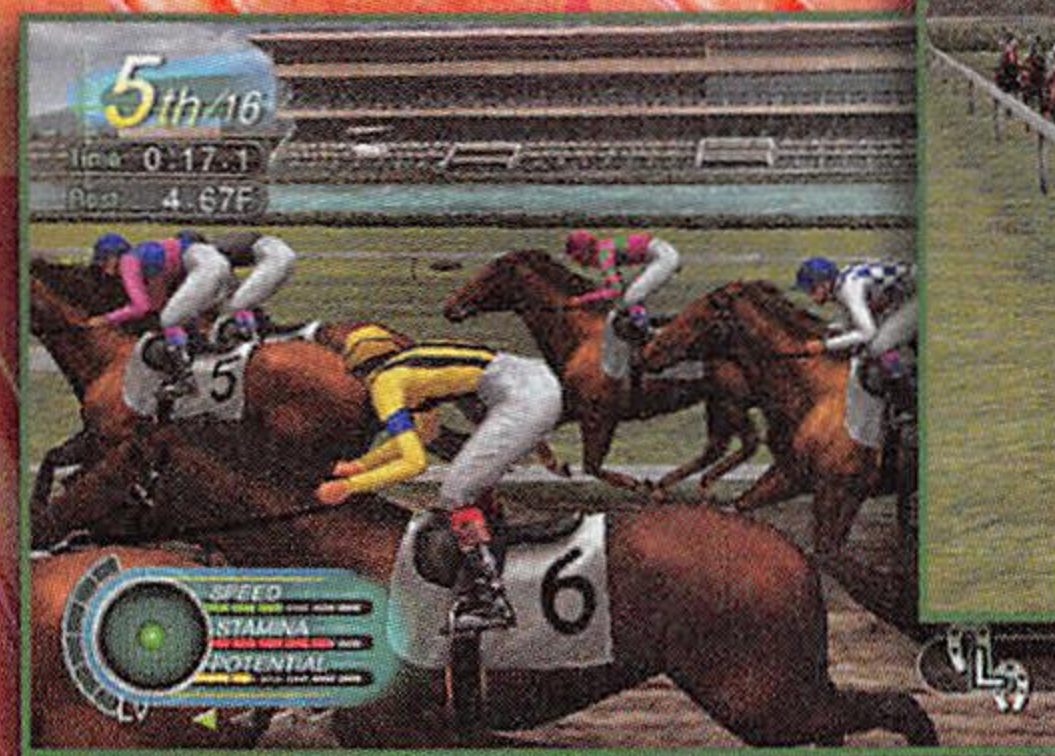
Improved visuals, more hidden items, and two new characters make this a better VF4.



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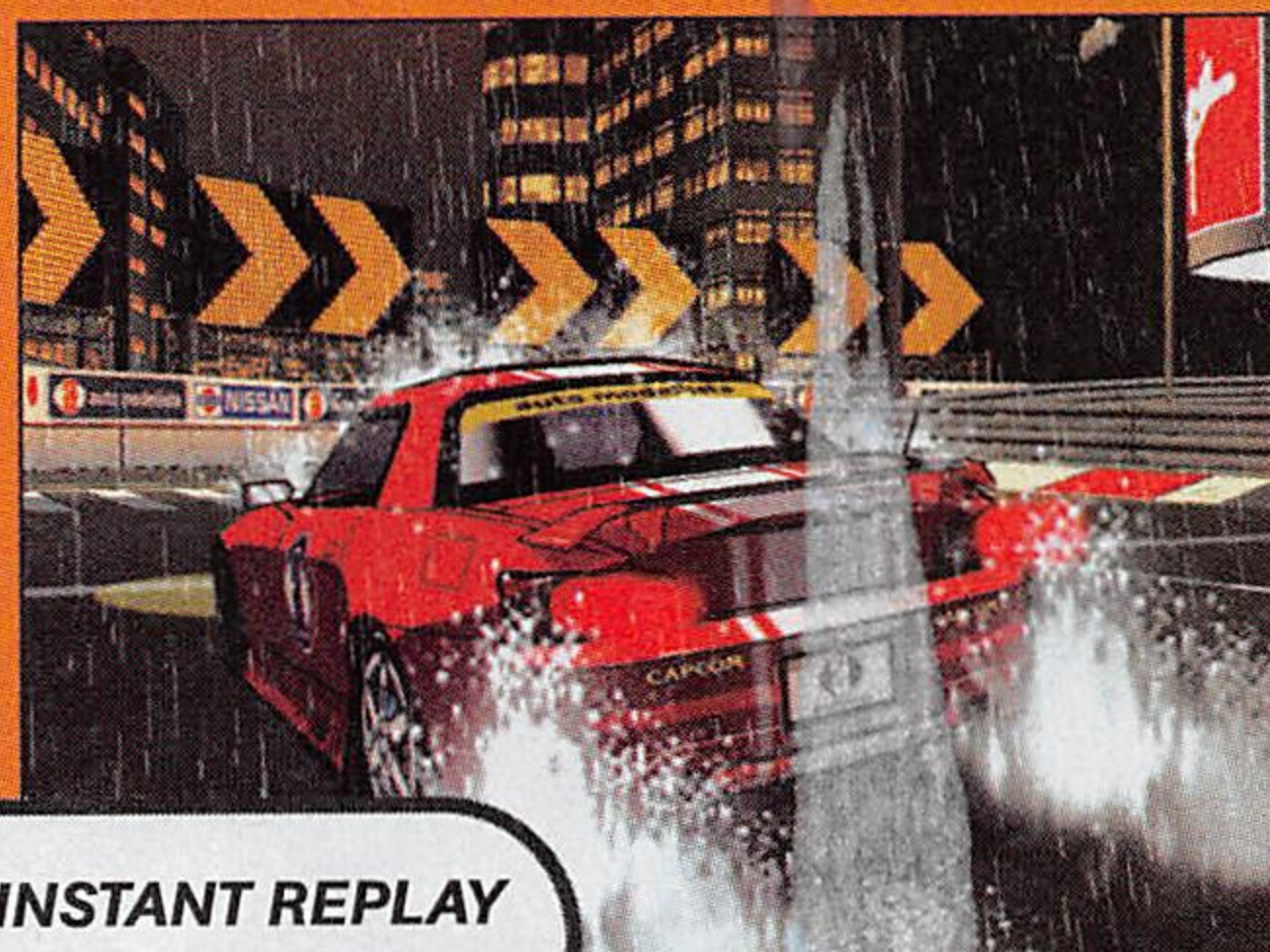
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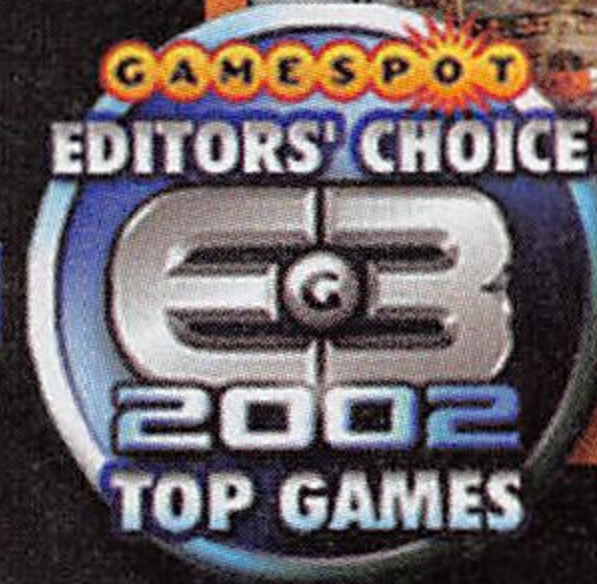
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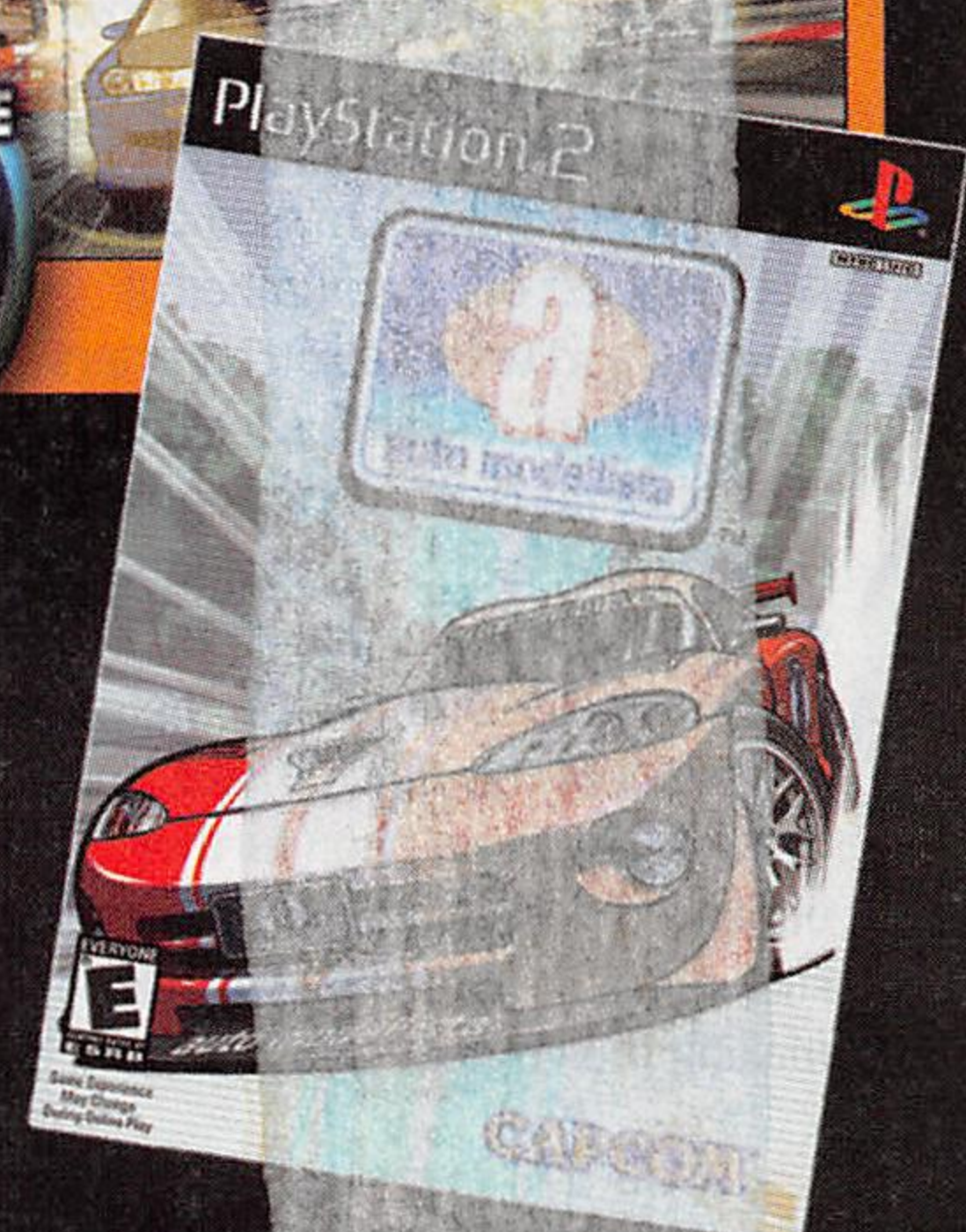
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GAME INFO

PUB/DEV EA | TYPE ACTION/ADVENTURE | REL DATE FALL | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB RATING PENDING



▲ With more responsive controls and a greater selection of attacks, players will have plenty of ways to take out the enemy.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING

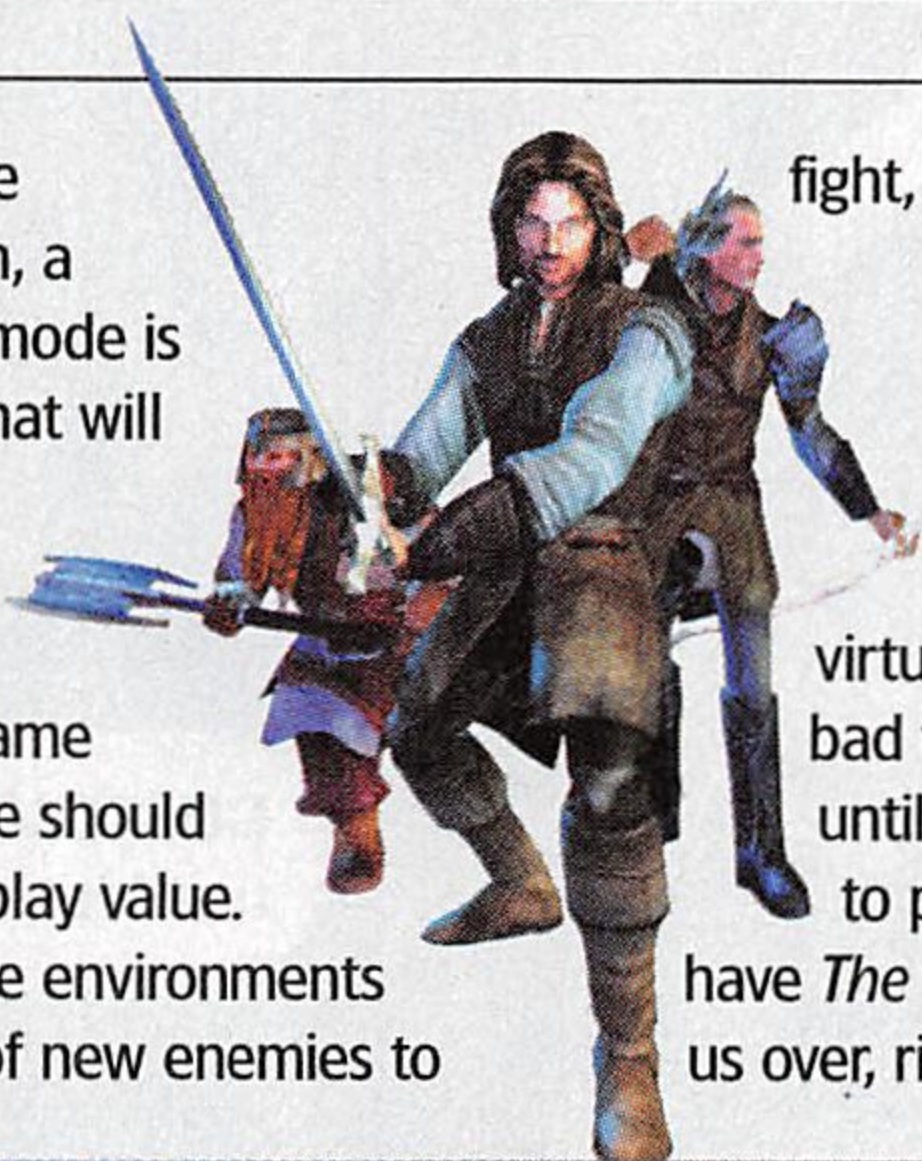
EA returns to Middle Earth

Movie-licensed games have generally been a losing proposition. It's rare that you see one that actually has a level of quality and innovation about it. Yet, last year's *LOTR* game, *The Two Towers*, seemed to buck that trend and provide an experience that was both enjoyable and challenging. EA now hopes to further build upon that in its adaptation of the upcoming, and eagerly anticipated, *The Return of the King* movie.

Developed in-house at EA's own studios, this "sequel" will throw in a large assortment of additional features that players missed out on last Fall. First off, the number of playable and unlockable characters has grown to at least six, including the likes of Gandalf, Aragorn, Legolas, Gimli, Frodo, and Sam, while the paths you'll travel actually branch off in different ways. Due to that, the game's not so linear this time around. The controls have also been further enhanced and utilize the right analog stick for multi-directional attacks, making the combat smoother and

more intuitive. More importantly, though, a multiplayer co-op mode is being introduced that will allow gamers to "form their own Fellowship" and play through the game together. That alone should greatly increase replay value.

With over twelve environments to explore, a host of new enemies to

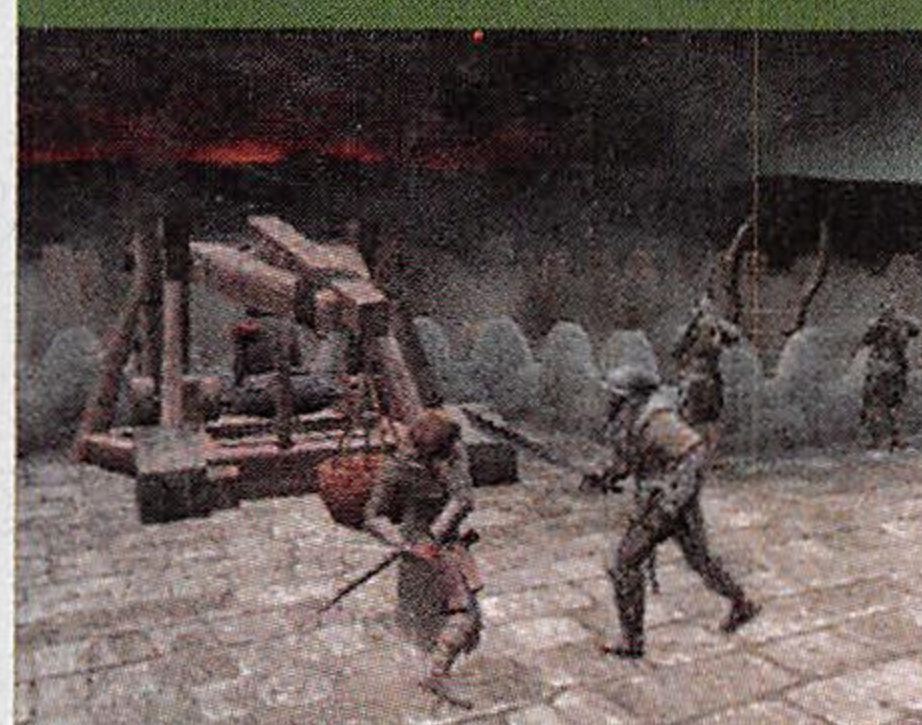
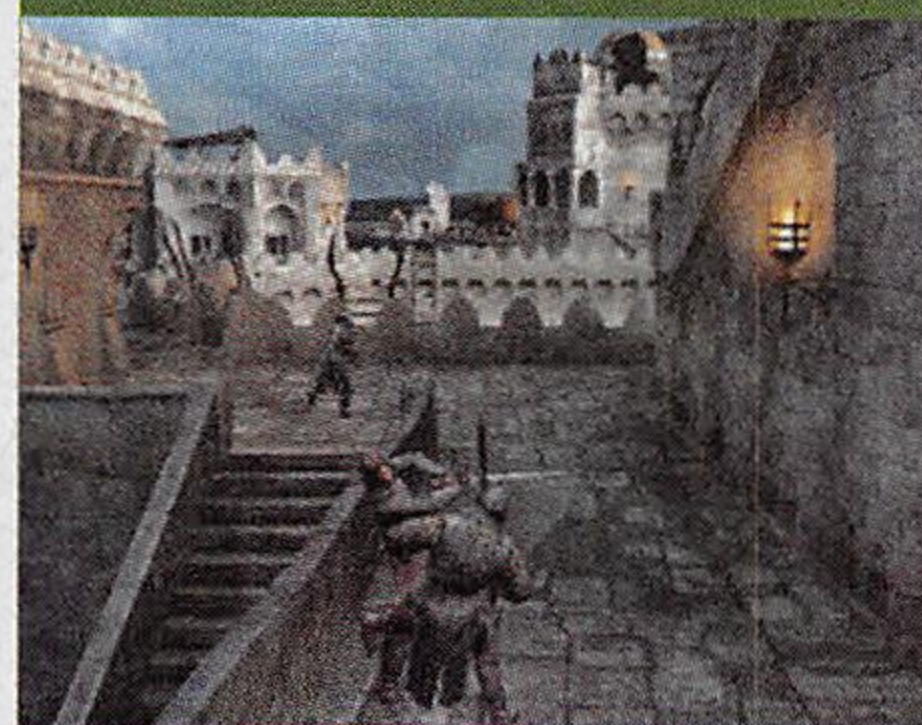


fight, and exclusive footage from the actual movie, *The Return of the King* definitely looks to eclipse the previous game in virtually all areas. It's just too bad that we'll have to wait until later this year in order to play it. Well, at least we'll have *The Two Towers* DVD to tide us over, right? **STEPHEN FROST**



Defending The Walls

It seems Aragorn and his friends are always stuck defending some sort of location. Only this time, the battle is far greater than what you've seen before.



▲ With such large environments to battle through, Aragorn is definitely going to have his hands full.



▲ Ah, there's no greater feeling than knocking someone over the wall and seeing them fall to their doom.

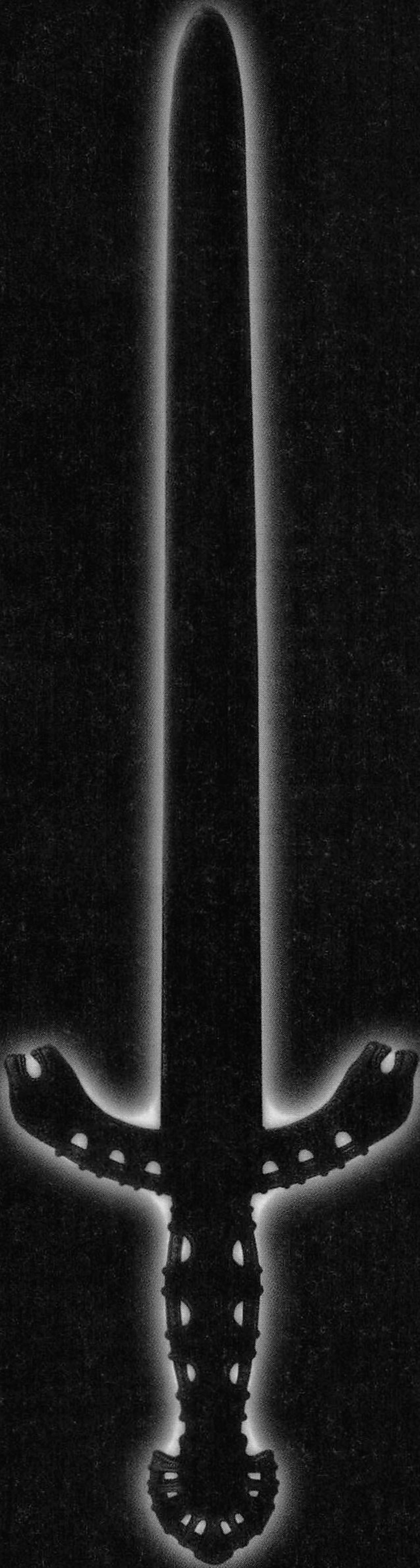


▲ You'll see a lot more creatures that dwarf even the mighty cave troll.

◀ This screenshot shows off the improved detail in both the characters and the environments. Quick, stab that orc!

THE BUZZ

With bigger environments and more characters, this title should eclipse *The Two Towers*.



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VIRTUAL ON MARZ

The hit mech series makes its PS2 debut

Fans of Sega's arcade heritage will no doubt remember the well-loved *Virtual On* games. Mech combat at its finest, the series has, unfortunately, never appeared on a Sony console. Now, however, PS2 owners will finally catch their glimpse of what Saturn and Dreamcast fans have been talking about for years. With *Virtual On Marz*, the talented team at Hitmaker! are going all-out in an attempt to reenergize the series and bring in even more innovation.

For veterans of the series, *Marz* will feature a "Virtual twin stick" setup that closely resembles the controls found in past *VO* arcade cabinets. In



Bar none, this will be one of the finest mech titles on PS2. Look out, Armored Core.

order to make things easier for newcomers, though, a selection of computer-assisted control interfaces have also been included, making jumping into the action that much easier. Throw in a large variety of unlockable bonuses, over 40 playable characters, and the folks at Hitmaker! might just have another hit on their hands. Definitely stay tuned for a complete hands-on preview in the coming months.

STEPHEN FROST

GAME INFO | PUB SEGA | DEV HITMAKER | MAX PLAYERS TWO | RELEASE DATE OCTOBER | ESRB PENDING



▲ The developers are promising larger environments and more detail in each of them. Will they be able to deliver?



▲ All the classic explosions and effects have been retained from the past games, but are now a little better looking.



▲ For the first time, you'll actually be able to fight with up to four VRs on the screen. Normally, it's always been one-on-one.



▲ All your favorite Virtuaroids (VRs) will be returning, but the selection of playable characters will be way larger than in the past.



▲ There are a lot more water areas, so the boat mode definitely comes in useful.



▲ The game is filled with moments that will make you say, "Cool!" and "Wow!"



▲ The routes that you can take will be even wider than before, allowing for a lot more maneuvering room. Feel free to utilize all your fancy driving skills to avoid enemy fire.

GAME INFO | PUB MIDWAY | DEV ANGEL STUDIOS | REL DATE WINTER | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB RATING PENDING

SPY HUNTER 2

More features should guarantee even more fun

While the popularity of the first *Spy Hunter* remake seemingly took most people by surprise, there's no denying how much fun it was to play. Granted, there were certainly problems with the title, but a lot of those should be addressed in the upcoming sequel. There may be a new developer in the driving seat, the formerly named Angel Studios, but that's not stopping them from throwing in a large number of new

features and gameplay elements.

Missions are longer, with a majority of them taking over 15 minutes to complete, while the overall physics system has been tweaked to allow for more bumping and offensive driving. Weapons are now fully upgraded as you progress and you can select which ones are appropriate for each mission. Lastly, but more importantly, the fabled G-8155 Interceptor has been redesigned and can transform into two additional vehicles, a sleek snowmobile and a 4-wheel drive off-roader. We just can't wait to try them out.

STEPHEN FROST

▲ Most mission objectives will have multiple ways to complete them, making the game less linear.



More weapons, transformations, and missions do a better game make.

FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE

3DO's end-times action epic

It's the end of the world as we know it, and nobody's feeling fine. Fallen angel Abaddon is tasked with finding the three Chosen (a prostitute, serial killer, and politician—we don't know which is scarier) and stopping the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse—War, Famine, Pestilence, and Death—plus (if they weren't enough) Satan himself (voiced by Tim Curry).

Luckily, Abaddon (designed by comic artist Simon Bisley) is no angel when it comes to fighting; he's a badass of supreme magnitude, packing two-fisted heat and a variety

of bladed weapons—not to mention some special powers.

He'll also go Old Testament on his demonic foes using some gruesome finishing moves unique to each enemy. From the streets of New York to Hell itself, he'll

get to put his skills to the test.

The game is looking great so far, with lots of visual variety and art design. The game will be a four-year project when complete, and the attention to even the tiniest of details is evident. Look for much more on the game soon in PSM. **RANDY NELSON**



▲ This creepy, foggy graveyard scene shows off the game's sinister atmosphere.

THE BUZZ
It's similar to *Devil May Cry*, but with a 3D camera and a lot more to it than *DMC2*.

GAME INFO PUB/DEV 3DO | RELEASE DATE OCTOBER | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB RATING MATURE

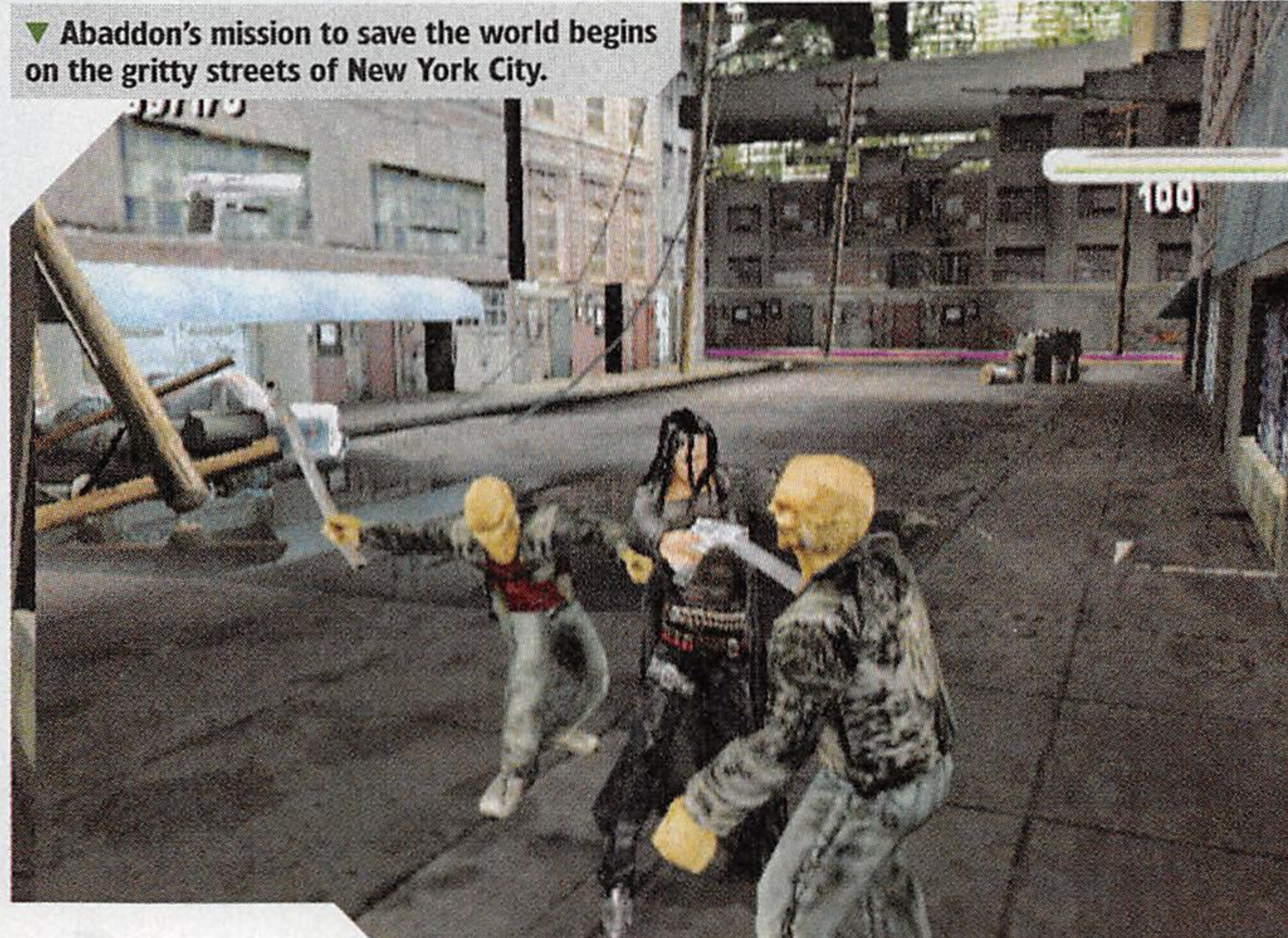


▲ From diving to strafing, Abaddon can employ a wide variety of cool, life-saving moves in combat. Is it Bullet Time yet?



▲ The variety of locations, from fog-shrouded graveyards to eerie nightclubs, promises to be very impressive.

▼ Abaddon's mission to save the world begins on the gritty streets of New York City.



GAME INFO PUB EA | DEV EA CANADA | TYPE SPORTS | REL DATE FALL | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB RATING PENDING

SSX 3 (WORKING TITLE)

The pinnacle snowboarding series heads for new slopes

ONLY IN PSM FIRST LOOK

The SSX series has long been a favorite of ours and it's been with eager anticipation that we've waited for news of

another sequel. So, it comes with great pleasure that we're finally able to reveal the first screenshots and info on SSX3 exclusively here in the pages of PSM. Currently slated for a Fall release, the game is well into development, but definitely takes a very different course when compared to its predecessors.

Instead of showcasing multiple courses located throughout the world, SSX3 will completely take place on

one mountain and in a single, yet vast, environment that you'll be able to explore. The focus of the game has been on opening up the tracks and really allowing gamers to discover what the different terrains have to offer. Details are still a bit limited, but we can tell you that there's been a major upgrade in the graphics

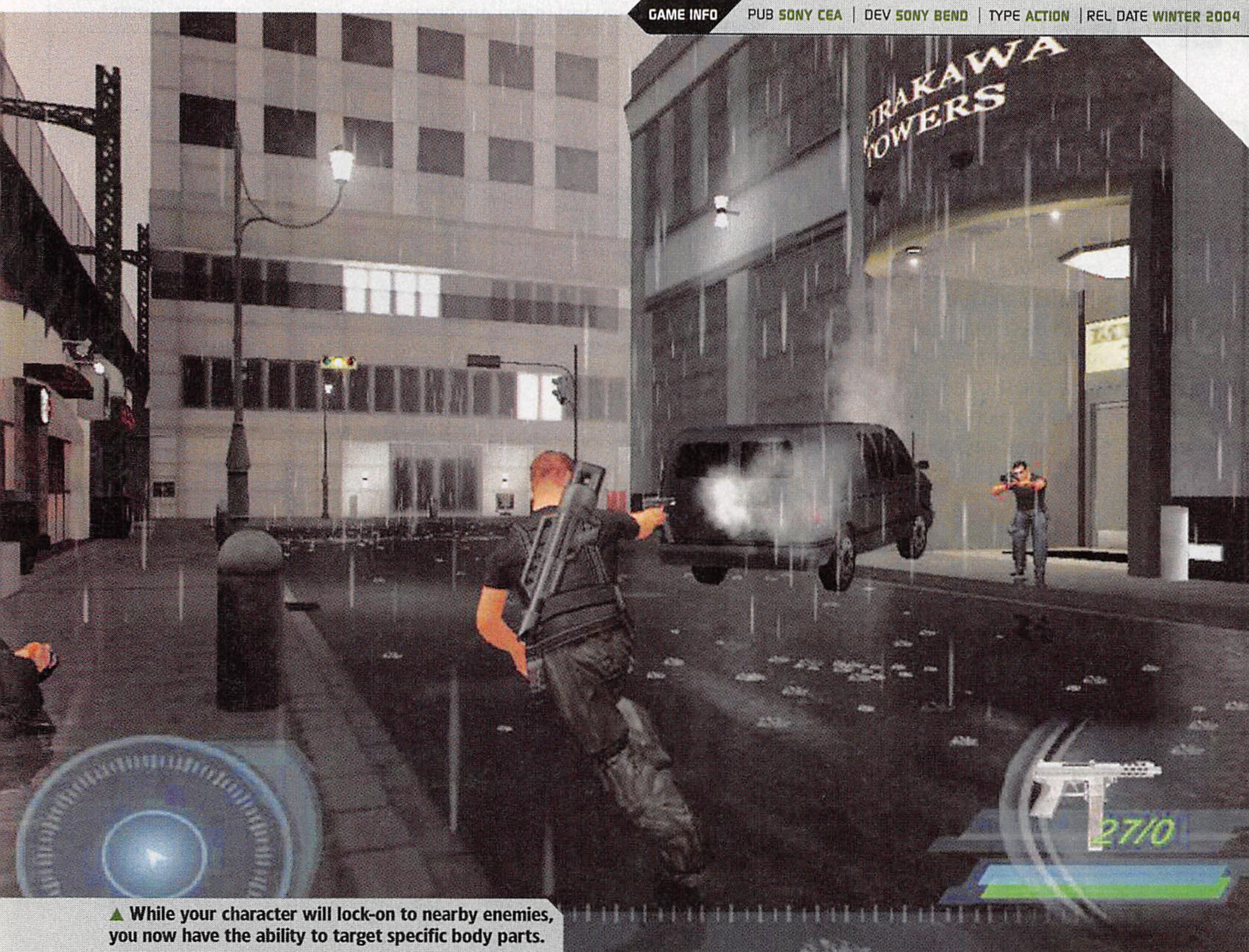
department, and the addition of all-new events, and "awe-inspiring" tricks. More should hopefully be revealed in the weeks building up to E3. Stay tuned! **STEPHEN FROST**

◀ Elise is just one of the characters returning from the original SSX game.

THE BUZZ
This is SSX taken in a whole new direction and we couldn't be more excited.

GAME INFO

PUB SONY CEA | DEV SONY BEND | TYPE ACTION | REL DATE WINTER 2004 | MAX PLAYERS FOUR (ONLINE) | ESRB RATING PENDING



▲ While your character will lock-on to nearby enemies, you now have the ability to target specific body parts.

SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN

*Syphon Filter
resurfaces in a
completely new way*

Originally released on the PSone, the *Syphon Filter* series has now evolved from its humble beginnings as a relatively standard single-player action title to a fully realized team-based and strategic experience. The development team in Bend, Oregon has created this latest sequel as a more ambitious look at the *Syphon Filter* universe. In fact, a lot of the typical things that fans might be expecting, such as a returning lead character, won't even be included. Surprised?

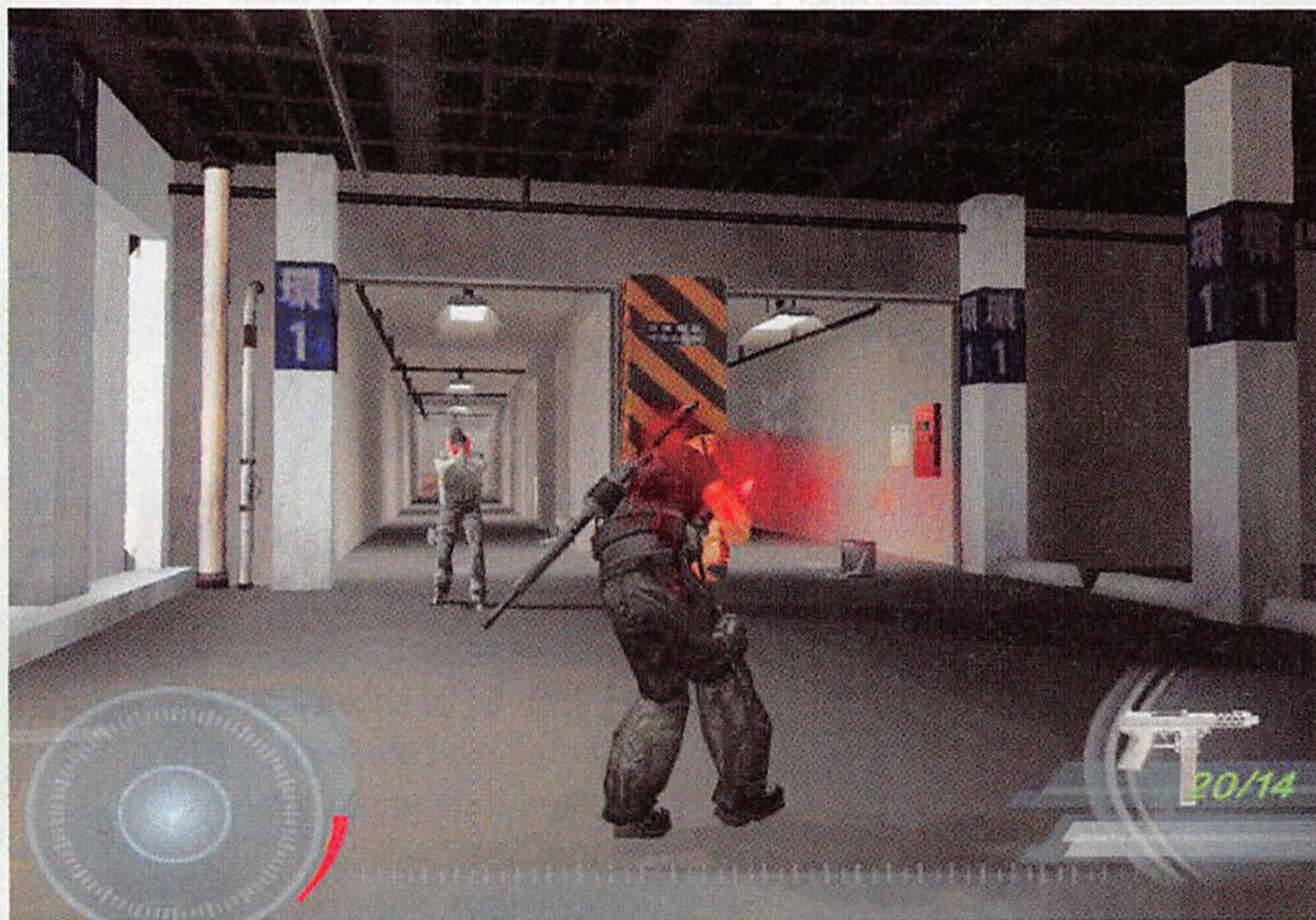
Now, with Gabe Logan basically out of the picture, the responsibility of creating a new starring agent falls squarely in the gamer's hands. Using the game's robust customization features, you'll be able to put together your character's look, from the design of their uniform to the look of their hair. You'll also get to select their armaments from an assortment of over 100 weapons and gadgets, as you take on the challenges of 17 different missions.

During gameplay, players will no longer be limited to automatic aiming,

as an improved targeting system allows for locking on to an enemies' individual body parts. So, if they're wearing body armor, taking them out is as easy as shooting out a knee or foot. Pretty clever, huh?

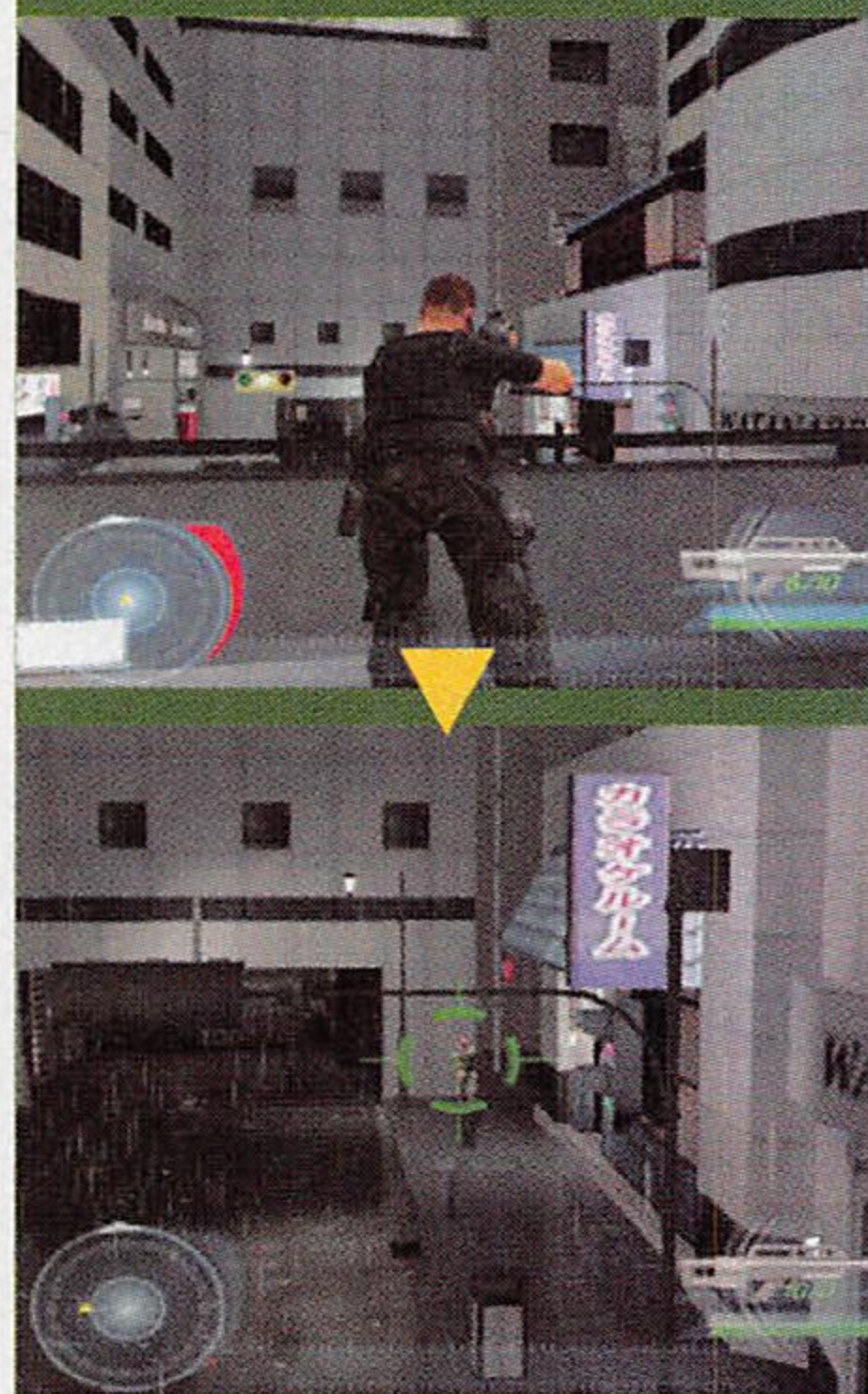
Expanding upon its single player experience, though, *The Omega Strain* will also feature a rather impressive online mode, where up to four players can play cooperatively. You'll

be able to work together to complete missions, and also reach areas of levels that are normally inaccessible offline. The game is also going to support the Logitech USB headset, which allows for easy communications with your teammates via Voice Chat. You just won't be able to use it, unfortunately, until the game's release early next year. **STEPHEN FROST**

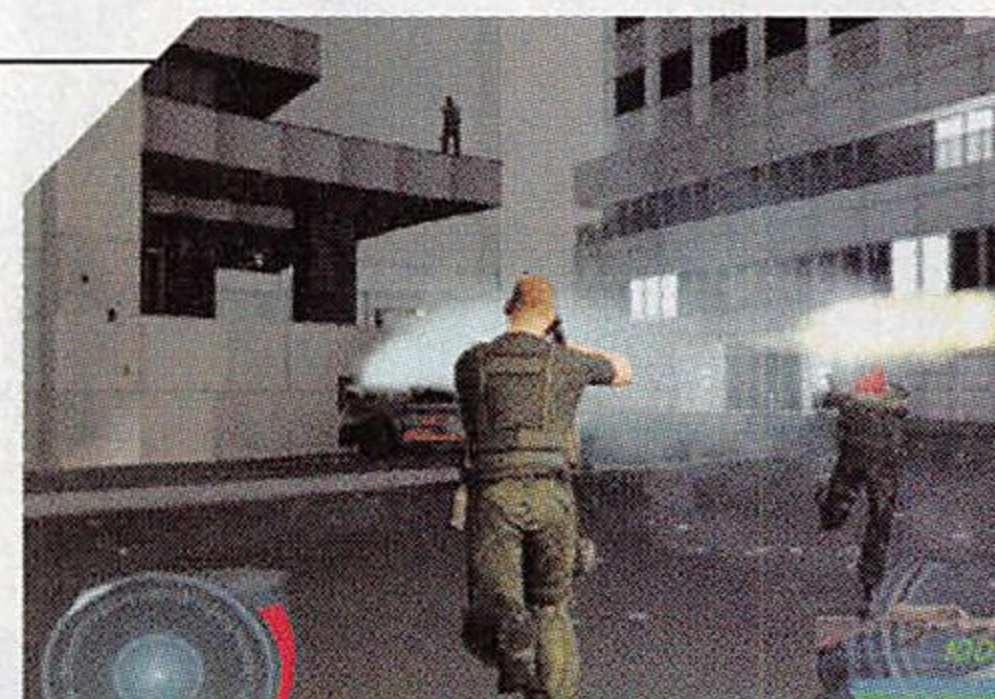


From A Distance

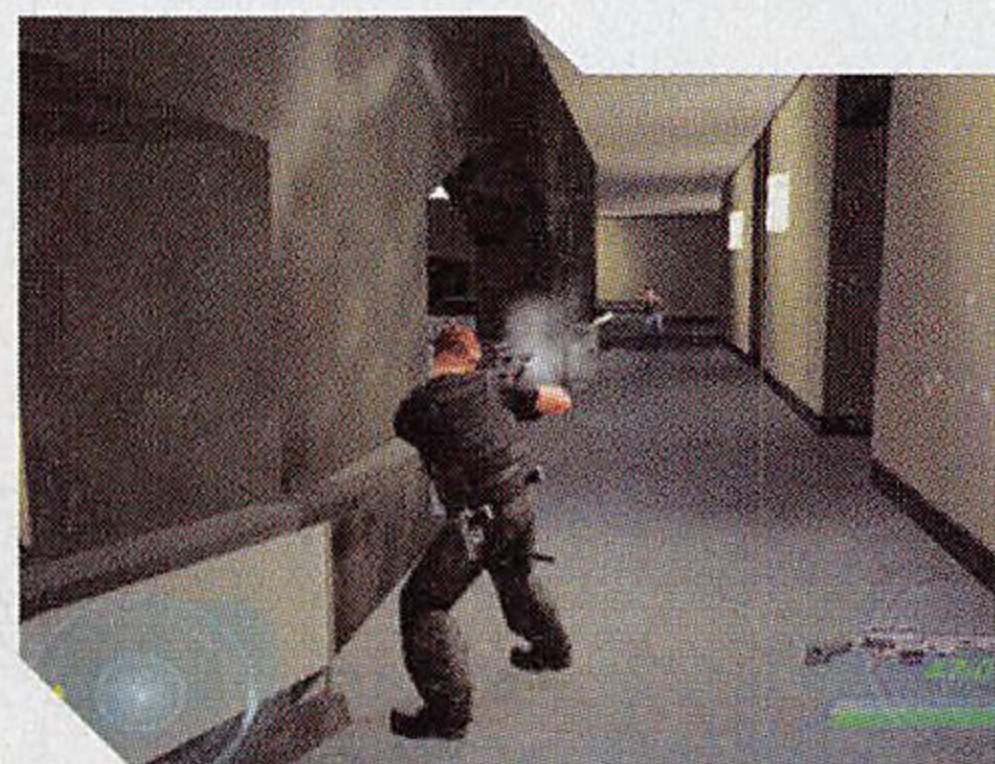
Sometimes, if you're skilled enough, you can take out enemy soldiers long before they even notice you. That's why the sniper rifle is so very useful from high locations.



▲ One good shot is all it takes and that bad guy will never bother you again. Just squeeze the trigger...



▲ Be careful that you don't get surrounded by too many people. It's hard to win when you're the focal point of a firefight.



▲ You can always easily see what weapons you have at your disposal because they are visible on your character.

◀ Fail your mission and it's not just your life that will end. Think of all the millions who will die, should you falter.

THE BUZZ

This looks to surpass even *SOCOM* with its online modes

STRENGTH. COURAGE. DESIRE.

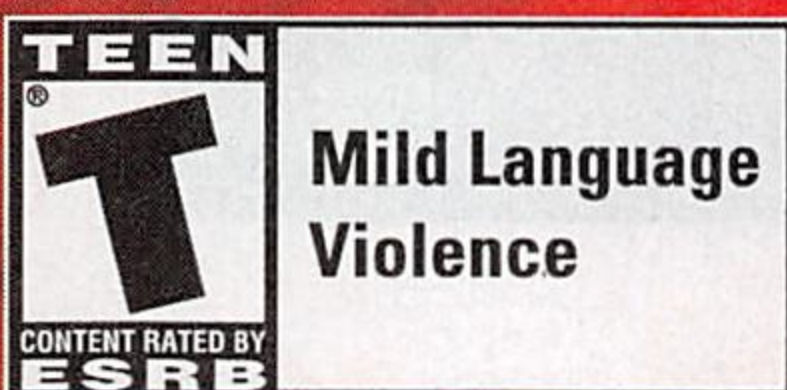
DYNASTY WARRIORS 4



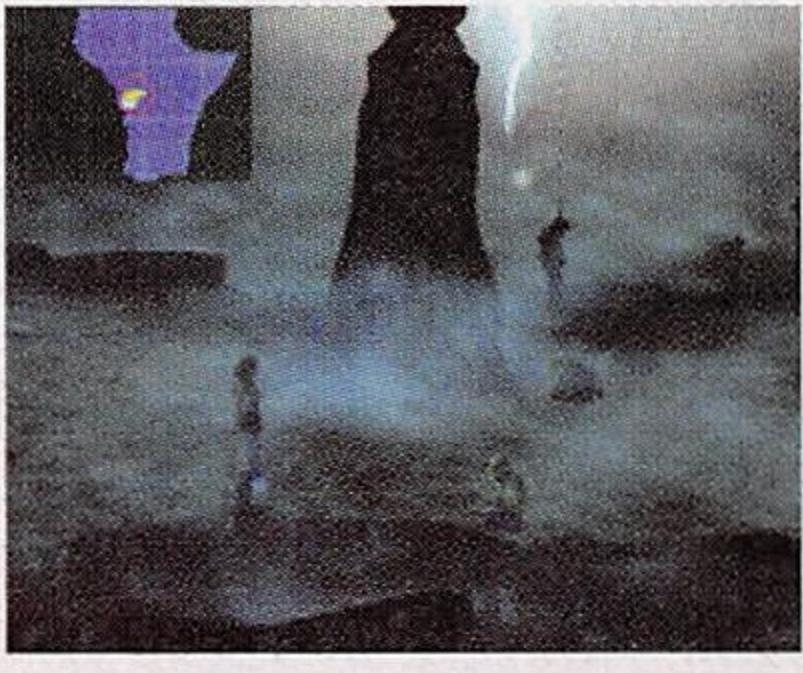
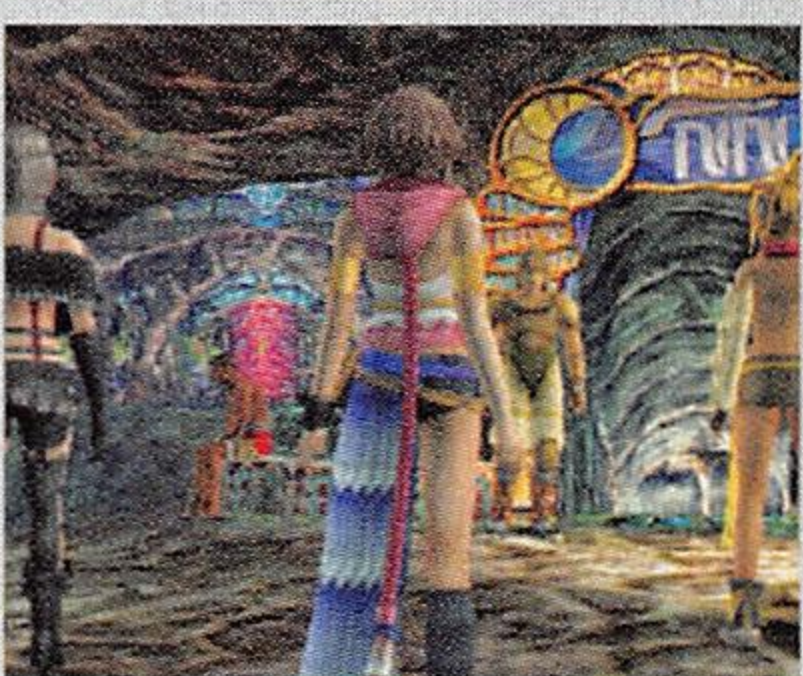
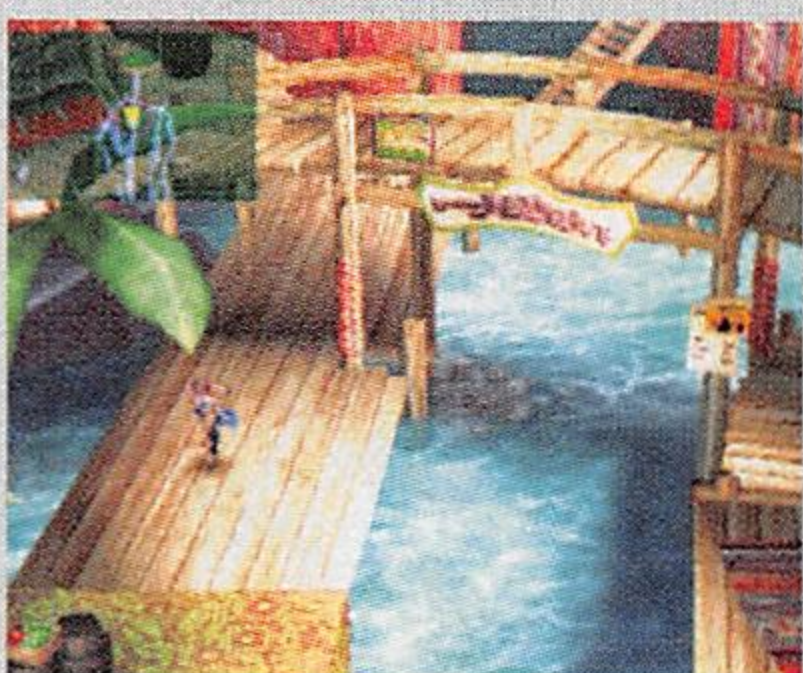
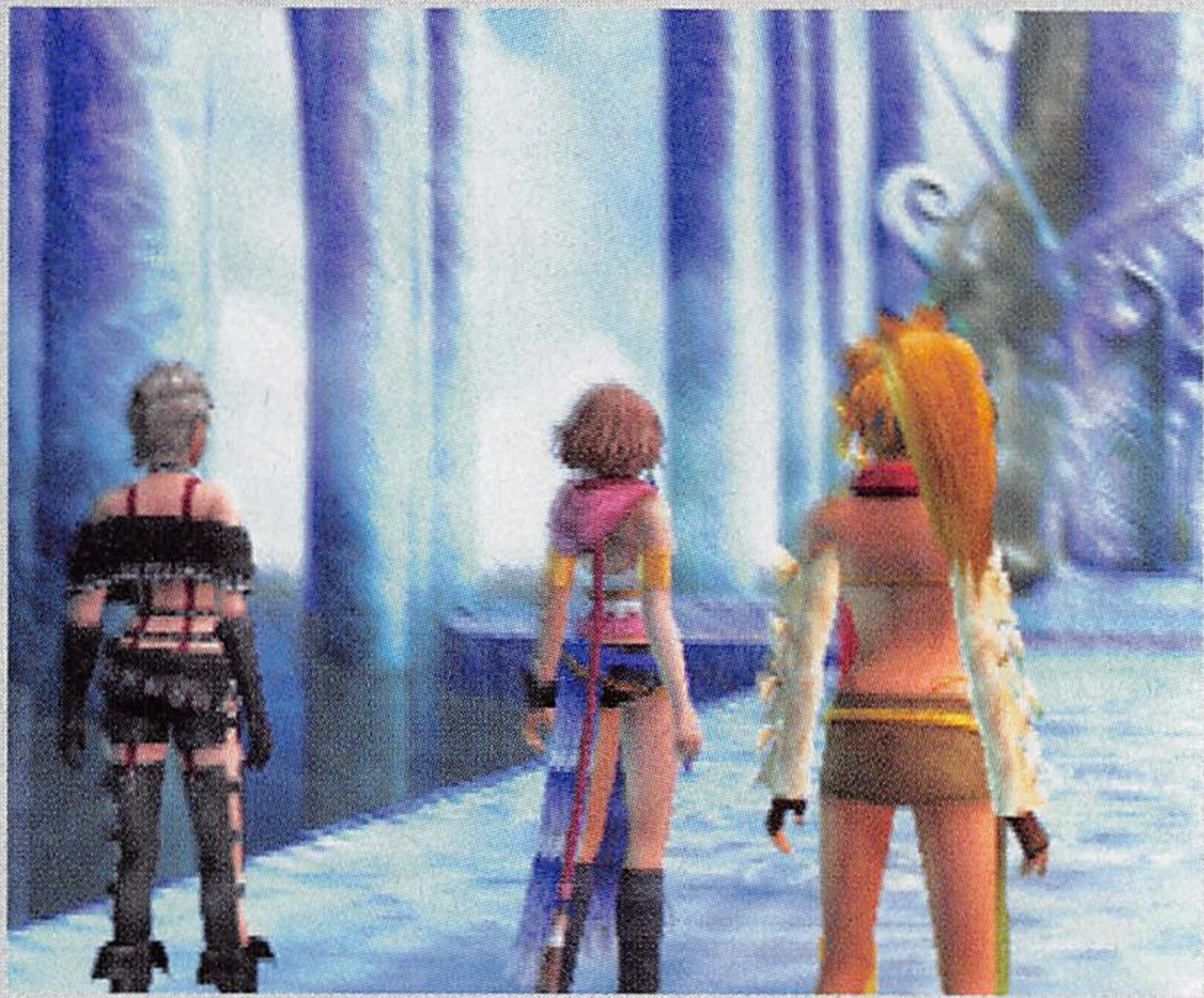
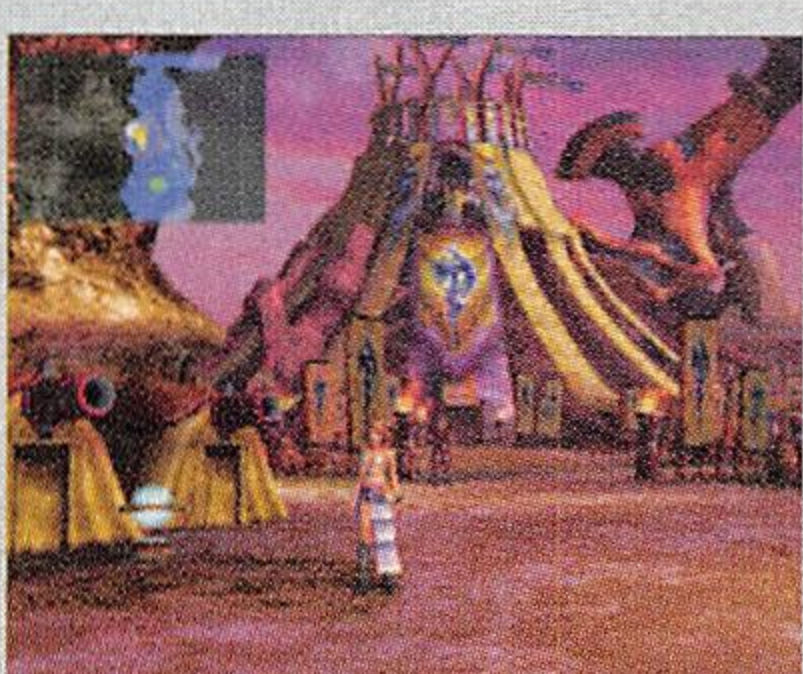
"... the best-looking game in the series yet." - ign.com

- Play over 50 stages across 17 unique maps
- Giant siege engines: battering rams, catapults, and bridge layers
- Fierce new one-on-one duels
- Create your own officers and bodyguards
- New character-specific special attacks
- Brand-new Weapon Upgrade System
- Kingdom Play! Select a new general for each stage in Musou Mode
- 3 brand-new officers for over 40 playable characters

AVAILABLE NOW

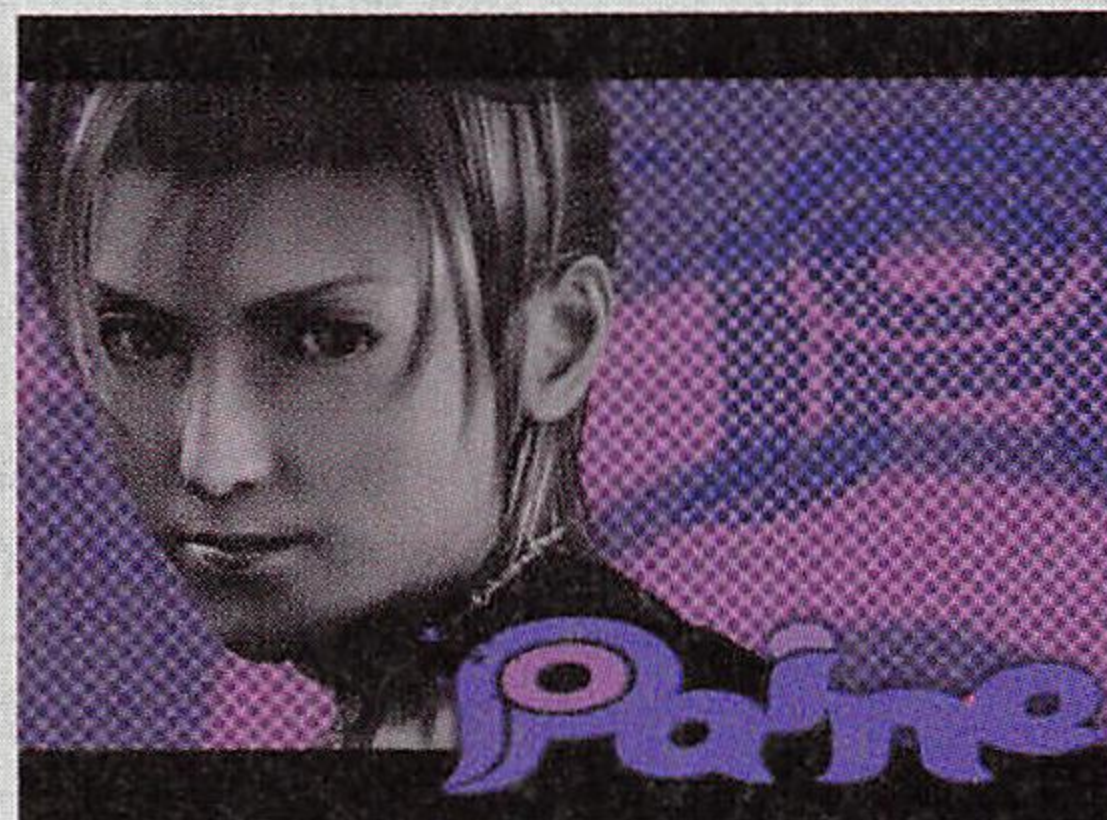
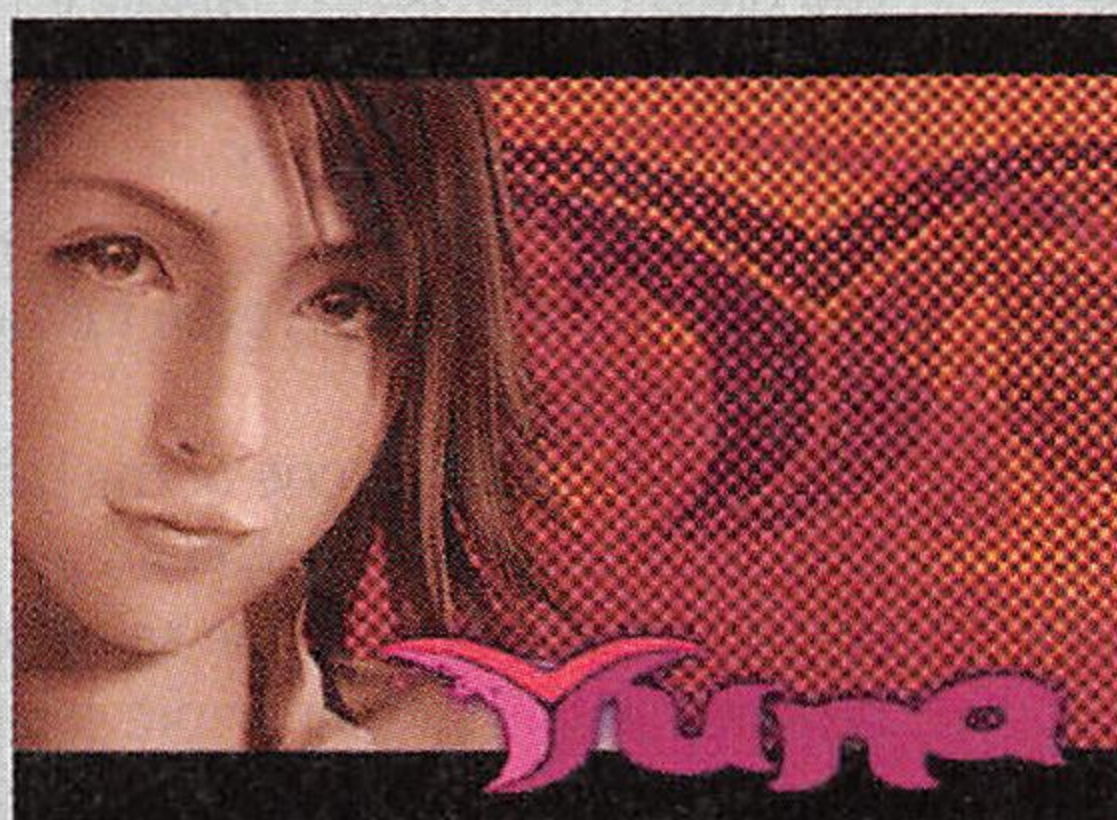
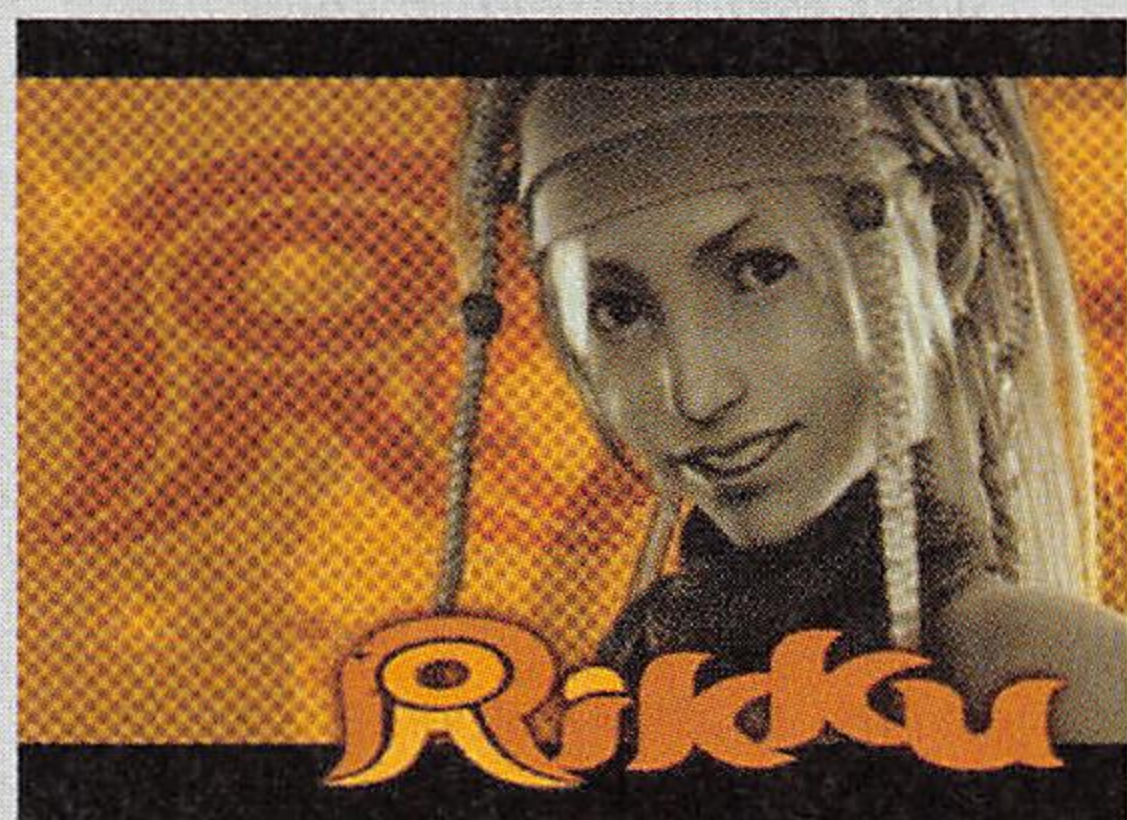


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GAME INFO / PUB/DEV SQUARESOFT | REL. DATE NOV | TYPE RPG | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB RATING PENDING

FINAL FANTASY X-2



Square's first "true" Final Fantasy sequel is worlds apart from anything else in the series

If you've ever dreamed of a *Final Fantasy* game with disco music, dance numbers and a bath scene involving its all-female cast, those fine folks at Square may have what you're looking for in *FFX-2*. We've been playing the Japanese version for hours now and have learned that despite being the first direct sequel in the series, *FFX-2* is so removed from its predecessor that even the most hardcore Square fan may not recognize it.

YOUR OWN FINAL FANTASY

Yuna's new adventure begins following her now-legendary CG dance number, on the deck of the Celsius airship. This ship is used by Yuna, Rikku, new-comer Paine and their oddball Gullwings Sphere Hunter group as they travel about the world of Spira in search of historical Spheres. You're free to lounge about on the ship (whose background music is pure disco), but the real fun

begins when you've spoken to the ship's navigator, who opens a map allowing you access to the world.

For the first time, a *Final Fantasy* game isn't structured around a rigid, linear storyline. Following an early dungeon sequence, you're free to go anywhere on the world map. Some areas, labeled on the map with an "Active Link" icon, directly progress the storyline. Other areas contain nothing but mindless wandering and battles, along with mini quests. The choice is up to you: progress through the story as fast as you can, or take your time moving about the world, fighting enemies and taking on quests. Whatever you chose, quest or Active Link, the game splits itself up into missions, complete with a "Mission Start" screen and an objective for



▲ The Hulk ain't got nothing on this guy.

Result Plates and Dress Spheres

Dress Spheres are assigned to slots on Result Plates which are then equipped by a character. When in battle, you can make a character switch only to jobs that are in an adjacent slot on the equipped Result Plate. By changing jobs in such a way, you gain special abilities for the rest of battle, including new spells, greater attack power, and even double HP!



▲ Gunner Yuna starts the battle out with a mere 1200 HP.



▲ Luckily, she has this particular Result Plate equipped.



▲ Double HP, baby!



▲ Transform — not once, not twice, but thrice, all the way back to Gunner form

clearing the mission and advancing on in the game.

Those who do rush through the Active Link sections in order to see the credits roll can probably finish the game in under twenty hours of play. Be warned, though, that if you're playing *FFX-2* expecting the usual dramatic Square storyline, you may end up being a bit disappointed. While there's a good amount of drama to be had, the story isn't at the epic level of other *Final Fantasy*

games. Most of the events are designed to make you laugh, and we're pretty sure fans of the original will do just that when they see the antics of Yuna and crew first hand.

There's actually no single story "line" in *FFX-2* to speak of, as the game allows for a few major branching decisions on the part of the player. This of course leaves room for massive replay value down the road, as everyone's adventure will be slightly different. When saving the

game, you're given a rating that indicates what percentage of the story you've encountered. Once you've passed the game, you can replay from the beginning keeping all your items and skills as you attempt to experience 100% of the story.

MORE ACTIVE BATTLES

If the nonlinear storyline and gun-toting Yuna seem a bit out there, wait until you've tried the all new battle system. In contrast to the slower paced battles of *FFX*, the battle system in *FFX-2* ups the speed and makes use of a few realtime and time-based elements to give somewhat of an action feel. Battles are still menu-based, but characters are positioned about the field in different ways depending on how you encounter an enemy. Attacks are followed by a recovery time, as displayed on a timer bar that indicates how long you have to wait before a character can execute her next move.

Keeping the timer bar in mind will help you chain together attacks, which is required for dealing heavy damage to enemies. This system is displayed most obviously through the Gunner job's quick draw attack where you press the R1 trigger rapidly in order to get a string of hits for mega damage. Other characters can contribute to this chain if you time their attacks properly, adding even further to the damage.

The Gunner is just one of the many jobs to be encountered in *FFX-2*, although this isn't quite the same Job system that you've seen in previous

titles. Girls can be assigned dress sphere items associated with a given job. As you make use a job's characteristic skills, new skills continue to appear until the job has been completely mastered. But unlike other titles, mastery of a job gives a character no special advantage. It's not the case that a character who's mastered the white magician job will "remember" heal spells when taking on the job of a black magician (although you can equip accessories for a few cross-job skills, if you like).

The point of this limitation is to get you to change jobs in mid battle through the use of a "Dress Up" command. Aside from a short flashy sequence in which the girls transform ala *Sailor Moon*, there's no penalty for switching jobs. Expect to use this feature a lot, especially once you've noticed how fast characters learn new skills.

DRESSED FOR DANCE

Perhaps the *Final Fantasy X-2* experience is best summed up when you've transformed all three girls into the new "performer" job, whose attacks include dances performed by the girls and designed to put the enemies under a spell. Even better are the few times when the normal battle music is replaced with the game's frantic, disco-ish chase theme. Seeing the girls shake their "thang" while fighting a set of poisonous fish creatures is evidence enough that *FFX-2* was made by a different kind of Square. And as fans of *FF* for years now, we certainly welcome the new take on things. Hopefully, other fans will too.

PSM BREAKDOWN

An up-close look at the game in action

Active mode

▶ While the battle menu system may look familiar, it actually contains several additional options that are new to the series.

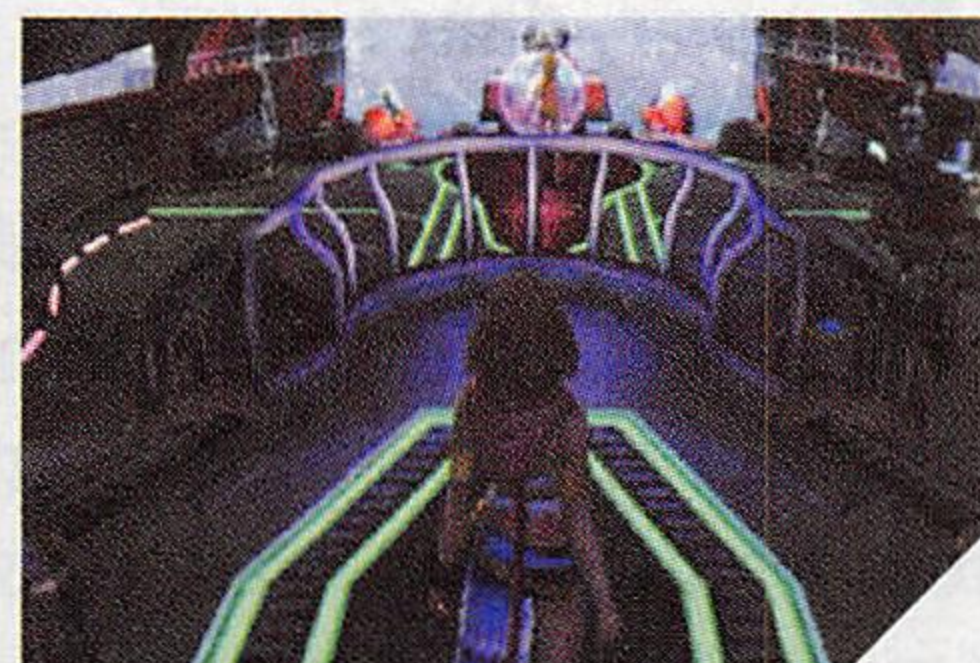
◀ Yuna does plenty of costume changes, but this is the normal set of clothes that you'll see.

◀ Paine is so arrogant in her ways that she actually faces away from her opponents. That takes some guts.



THE BUZZ

This is not the standard *FF* title that you might be used to. Be ready to be surprised.



▲ Yuna looks out onto her bridge and future.



▲ The Celsius airship carries you everywhere.



▲ You don't even want to ask...



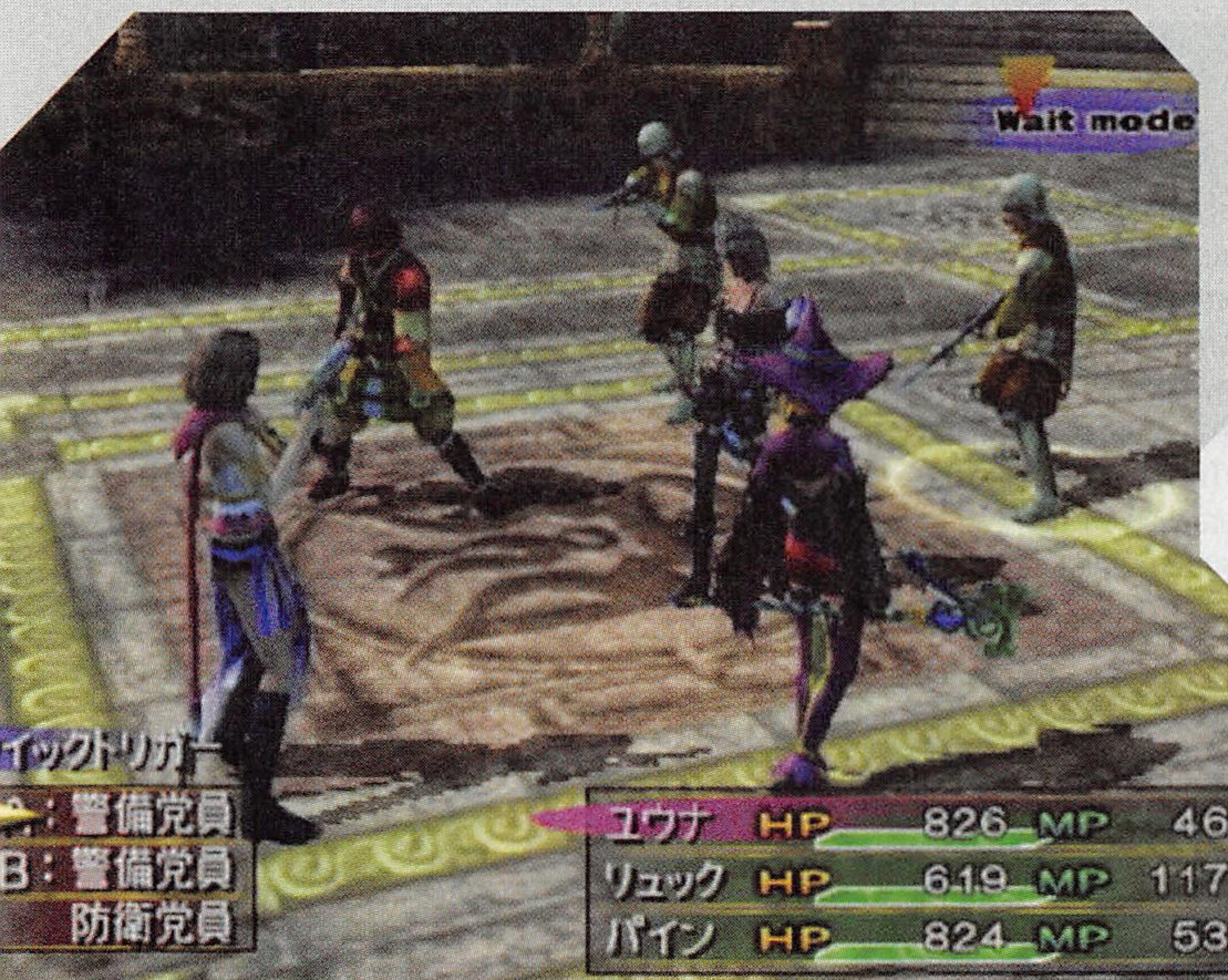
▲ You can fully travel around your ship.



▲ Battles are fast and fun, and full of effects. It's like a David Copperfield show.



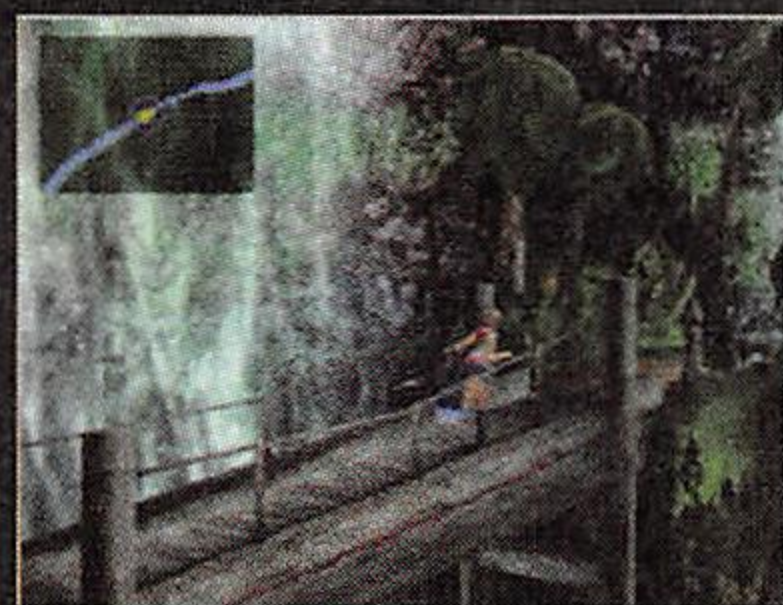
▲ Recognize this place from the original? You'll be visiting several more items.



Positioning during battle is even more important in FFX-2 than it was in FFX.

Two years later...

... and the game still looks amazing. Aside from a few improvements to facial animation and detail, Square hasn't improved its engine much in the switch to FFX-2. It doesn't matter one bit, though, as the game is still gorgeous.



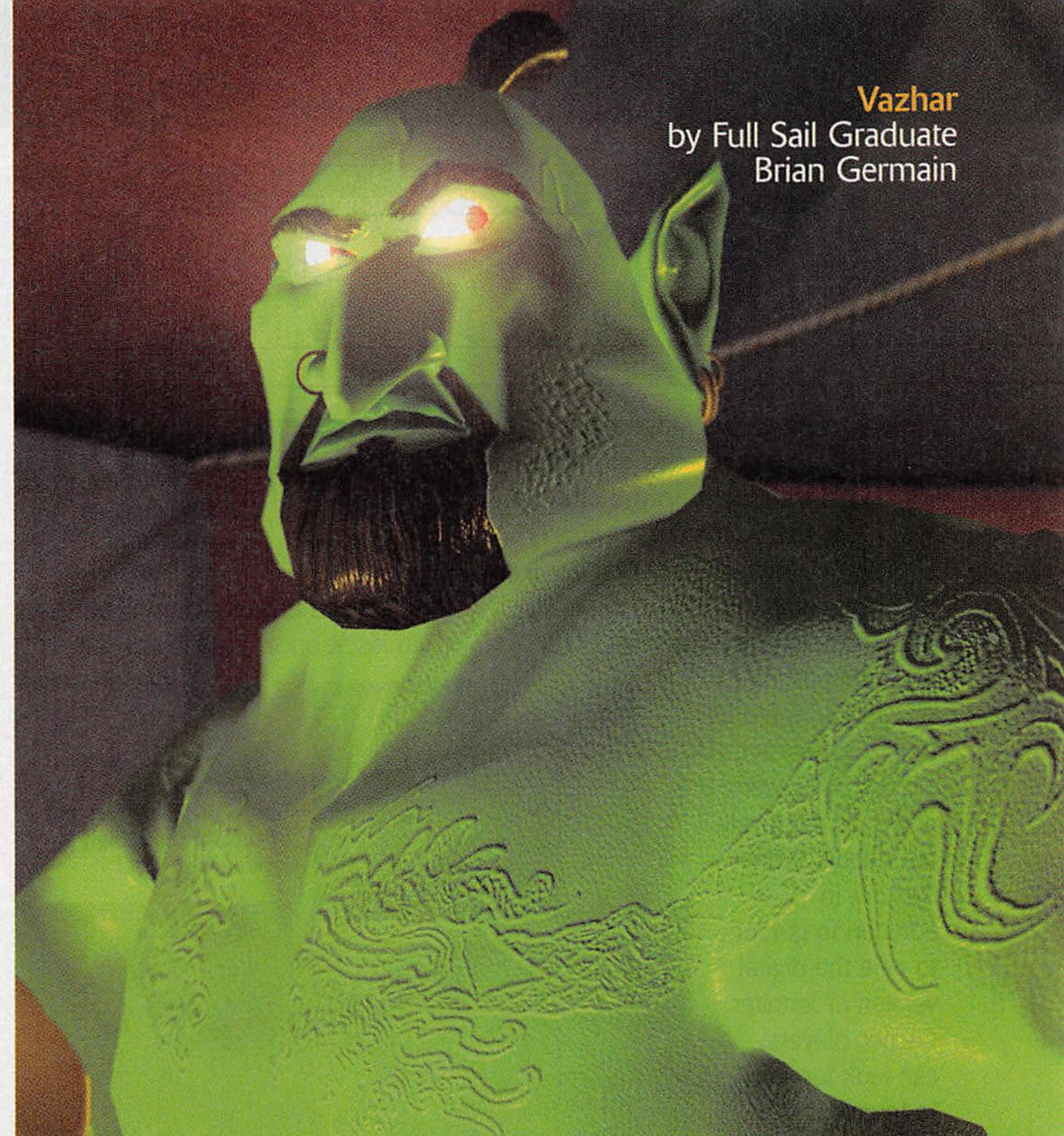
▲ You'll visit a lot of the same locations from the previous game...



▲ ...and come across several very familiar characters and enemies.



FINAL FANTASY X-2



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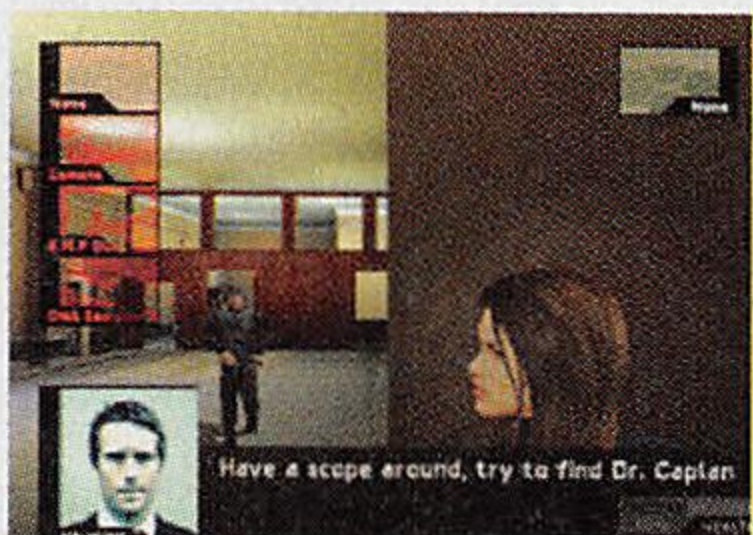
GAME INFO PUB/DEV **ACCLAIM** | MAX PLAYERS **ONE** | RELEASE DATE **FALL** | ESRB **PENDING**

ALIAS

One of the most-watched action dramas on television just became one of the year's most eagerly anticipated action games.

Blending combat, action, and stealth, *Alias* looks to make the most of its license, boasting a storyline scripted by the TV series' actual writers and casting the player as the lovely, but deadly Sydney Bristow. In addition to getting to ogle the digital version of Jennifer Garner, players can look forward to tons of spy-type gadgets and a combat system

► You can kick several baddies' asses at once—though the guy in the wheelchair is on your side.



◀ Sydney has all sorts of cool tools, like an E.M.P. Gun, a DNA sampler, and of course, those high-kicking feet.



THE BUZZ

The TV show rocks, and it looks like the game will contain all the same goodies.

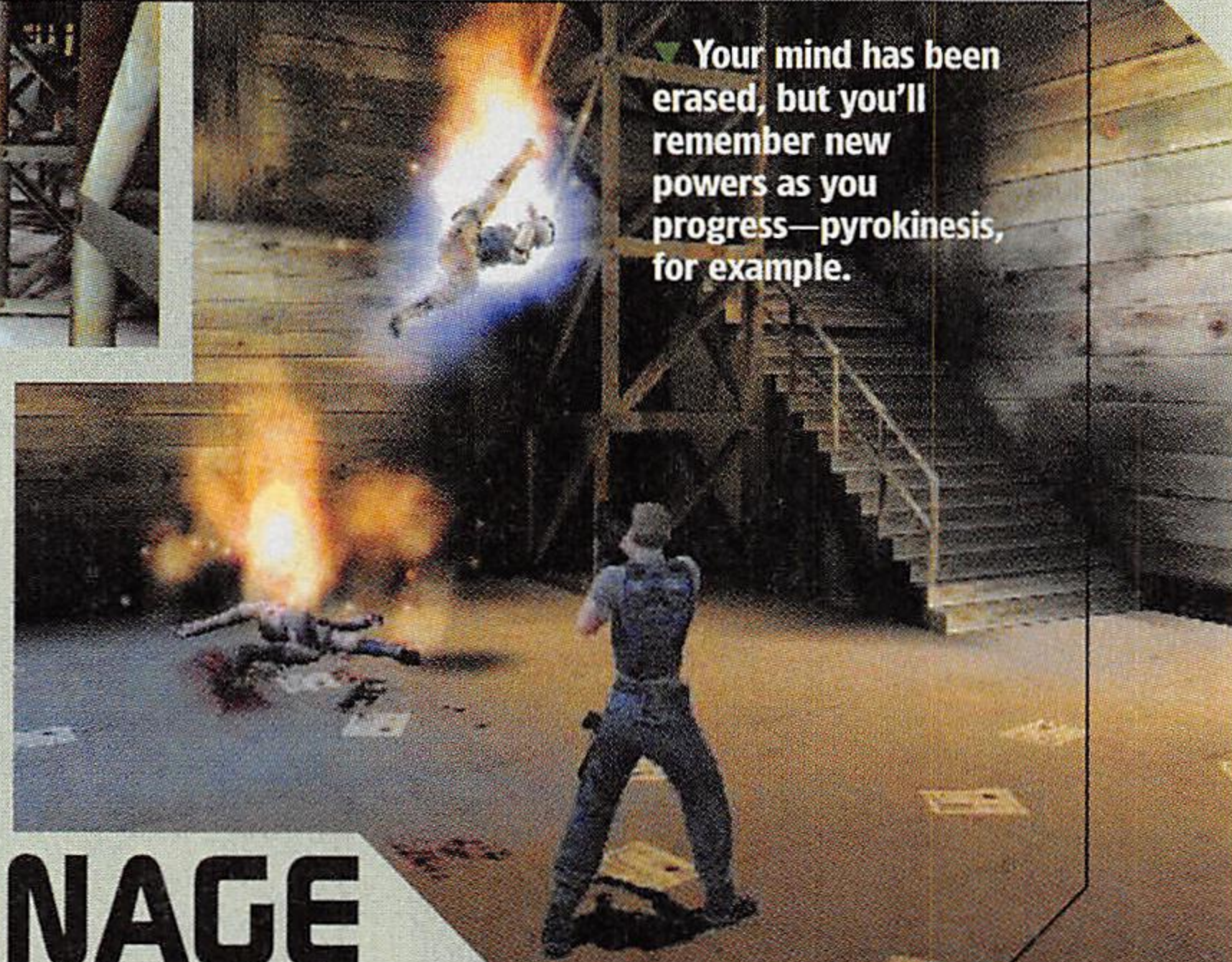
that lets you karate-kick multiple enemies at once. Tune in this fall.

ERIC BRATCHER

GAME INFO PUB/DEV **MIDWAY** | MAX PLAYERS **ONE** | RELEASE DATE **Q4** | ESRB **PENDING**



▲ *ESPIONAGE* gives the players free reign over some wickedly useful abilities. For instance, you can levitate an enemy in midair to make them an easier target.



▼ Your mind has been erased, but you'll remember new powers as you progress—pyrokinesis, for example.

ESPIONAGE

This third-person actioner begins with the closure of the U.S. military's psi-ops division (which it never admitted to having, anyhow). Unfortunately, its leader promptly goes rogue, using his team to brainwash normal people into an army bent on world takeover. That is, unless you can stop him.

The twist is that, as a former psi-operative yourself, you have all sorts of superhuman powers. Wanna stack

crates on a rooftop using only your mind? Done. Set them on fire, again using only your mind? Done. Possess an enemy and force him to run through the crates, plummeting off the roof to a flaming death? Well done.

ERIC BRATCHER

THE BUZZ

Over-the-top psi-powers, plus a realistic physics system, equals creative carnage.

GAME INFO PUB **MAJESCO** | DEV **TALDREN** | MAX PLAYERS **TBA** | RELEASE DATE **FALL** | ESRB **PENDING**

BLACK 9

Anear-future sci-fi story, *Black 9* casts the player as a mercenary in a world ruled by nine competing factions of

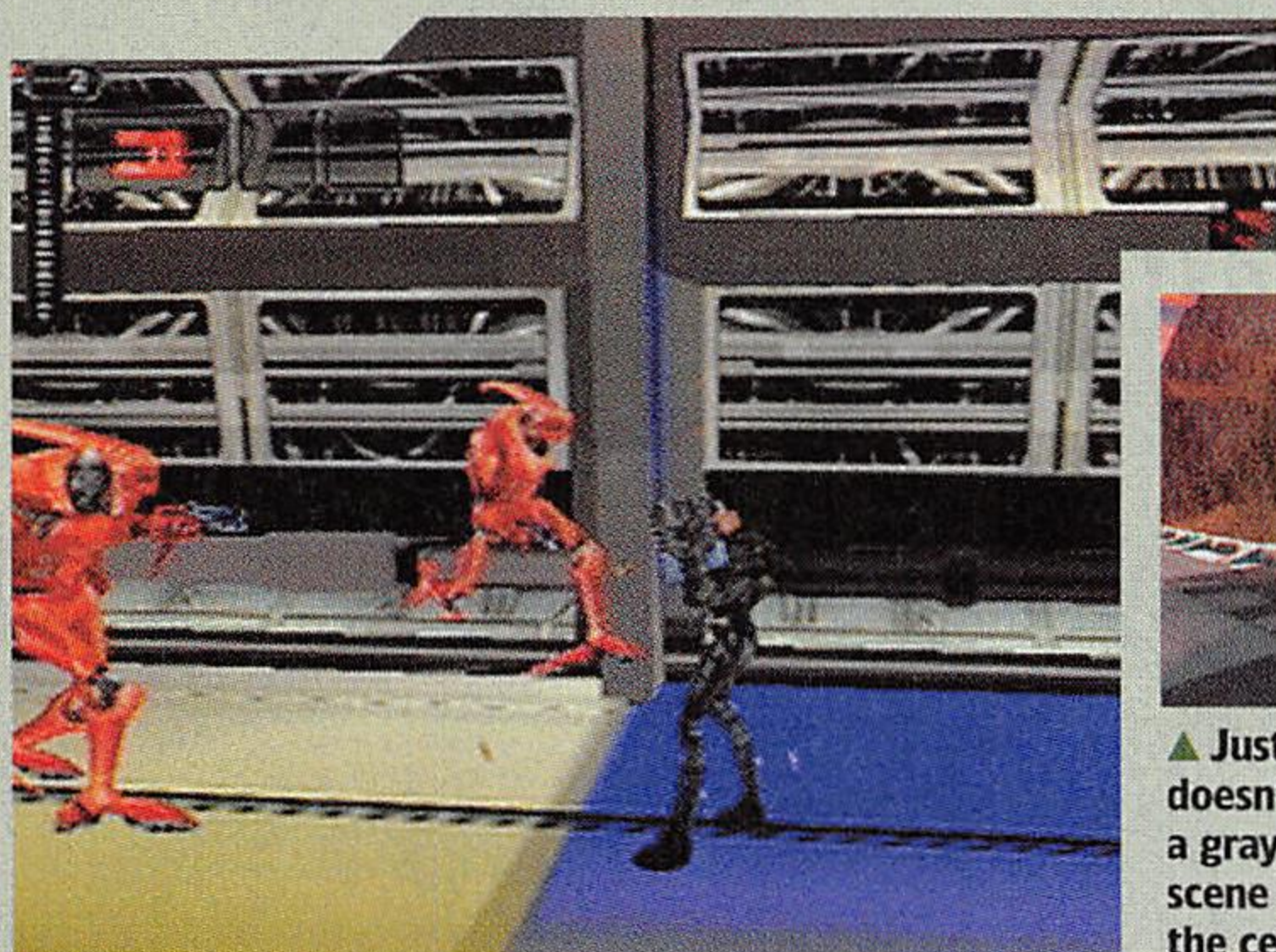
Illuminati. For instance, the Genesis faction wants to create an all-knowing AI construct, while the Zubrin are focused upon building huge "world ships" to explore the galaxy. And none of them can be trusted. You begin the game wielding your futuristic

THE BUZZ

Solid action in a richly imaginative setting, fueled by a twisting, turning storyline.

weaponry and nanite-enabled super powers for the highest bidder, but will change allegiances as the storyline unfolds, taking you from Earth to the Moon, Mars, and who knows where else. We're intrigued.

ERIC BRATCHER



◀ Your enemies will range from robotic spiders to monks who shoot flame from their hands.

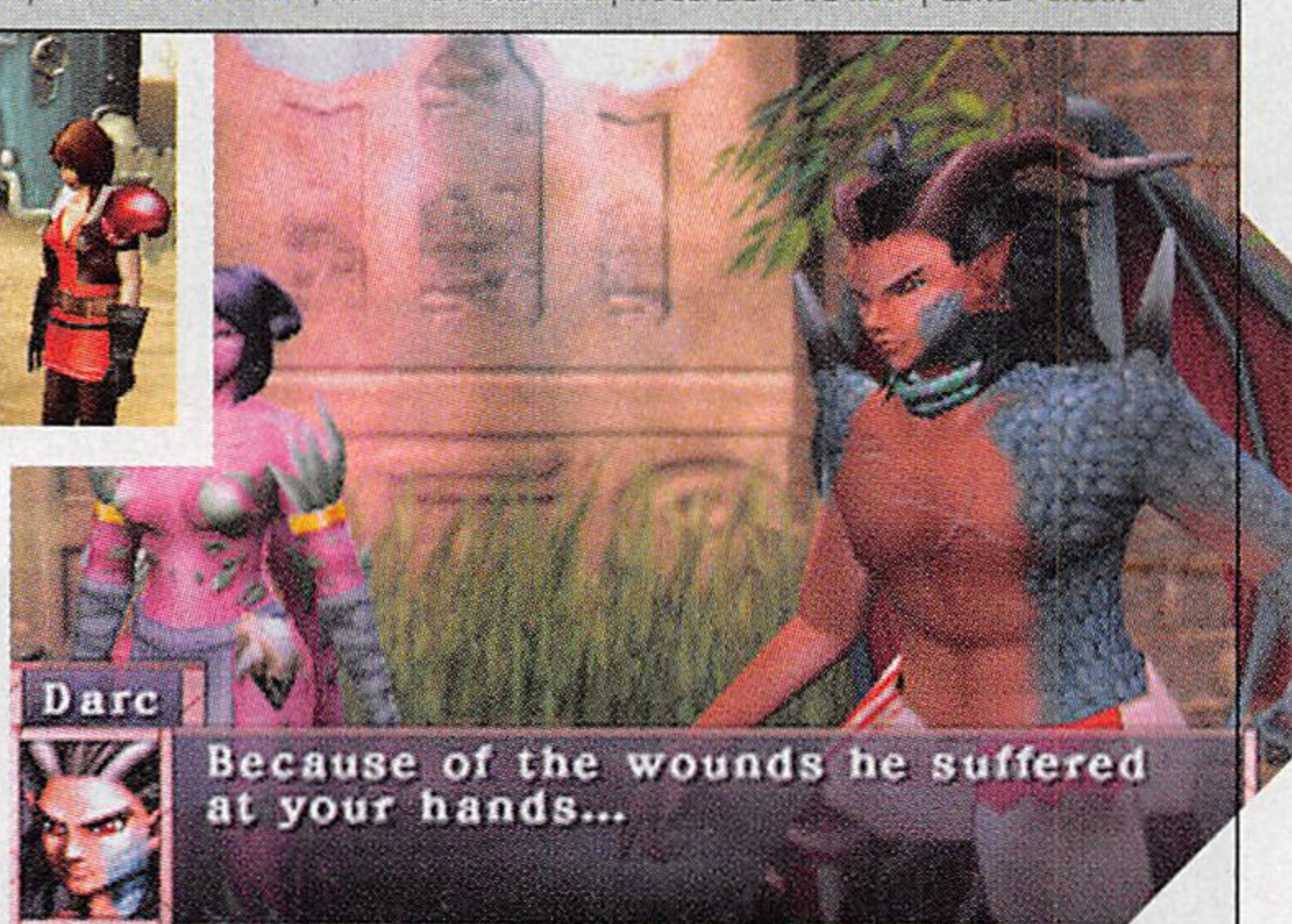


▲ Just because it's sci-fi doesn't mean every location is a gray hallway. This awesome scene is actually indoors (see the ceiling lights?)

GAME INFO PUB **SONY** | DEV **CATTLE CALL** | MAX PLAYERS **ONE** | RELEASE DATE **MAY** | ESRB **PENDING**



▲ *Arc the Lad: TotS* has two parallel storylines, starring Kharg (in blue), Darc (in wings and scales), and more than 12 other playable characters.



Darc
Because of the wounds he suffered at your hands...

ARC THE LAD: TWILIGHT OF THE SPIRITS

This great-looking RPG has two main characters. First is Kharg, a seemingly typical human prince who has begun hearing the voices of spirits. Next is Darc, a half-human deimos (a sort of orc/demon

race) whose peers treat him like an outcast. Their quests begin separately, but will surely intertwine—they don't know it, but Darc and Kharg are brothers. With this compelling story, lush graphics, and a turn-based battle system that both moves quickly and incorporates the battlefield maneuvering of a strategy RPG, Sony may have a sleeper hit on its hands.

ERIC BRATCHER

THE BUZZ

Compelling characters and an epic story combined with a refreshing battle system.

GAME INFO PUB SONY SCEA | DEV IINCOG INC. | MAX PLAYERS FOUR | RELEASE DATE JULY | ESRB PENDING

DOWNHILL DOMINATION

In a first for this generation of consoles, the makers of *Twisted Metal Black* and *War of the Monsters* are heading

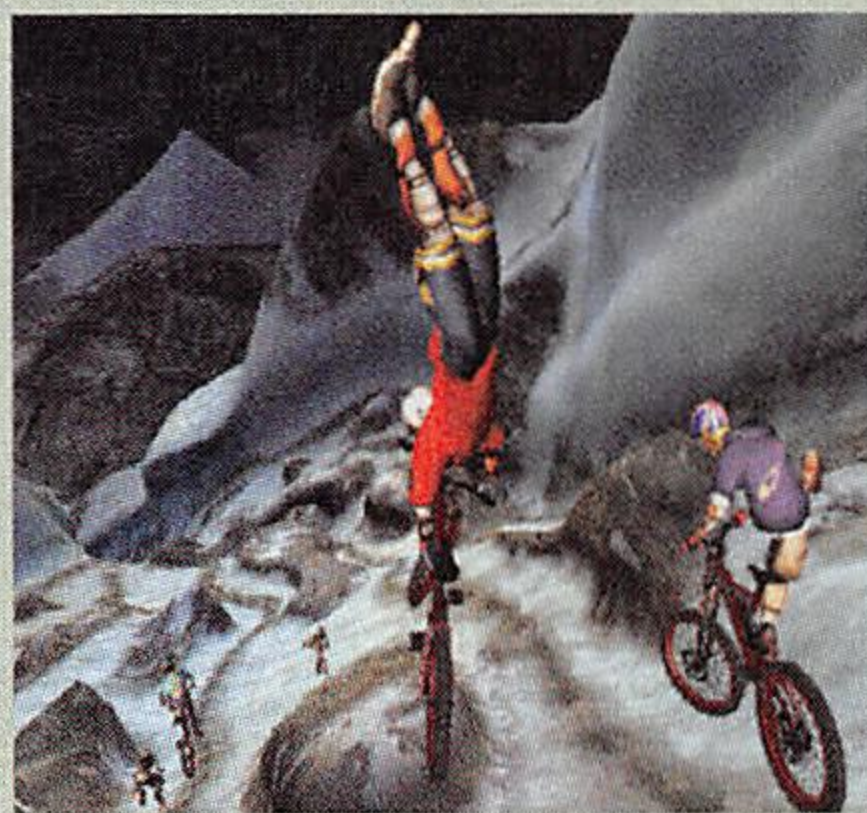
in a completely different direction—downhill—as they attempt to make a racing game based on the popular sport of mountain biking. *Downhill Domination* will feature 14 riders, five of whom will be pro, and at least 27 expansive environments.

The focus of the game will be on

exploration and tricks, as both will allow you to get the leg-up on the other competitors. Gamers will have complete freedom to race wherever they want, but will need to avoid various weather and environmental hazards.

STEPHEN FROST

◀ There will be a large variety of tricks and “offensive” moves for players to pull off.



THE BUZZ

The makers of *Twisted Metal: Black* create a biking game? We're definitely interested!

GAME INFO PUB EIDOS | DEV KRONOS | MAX PLAYERS ONE | RELEASE DATE TBA | ESRB PENDING



▶ Thanks to the power of the PS2, you won't see any more of those fuzzy FMV backgrounds. Everything's fully 3D this time.



FEAR EFFECT: INFERNO

No other games on the PSone pushed so many boundaries in both technology and the ESRB rating than the *Fear Effect* titles. Their usage of looping FMV backgrounds coupled with some rather risqué characters and situations generated a rather dedicated fanbase. For the latest sequel, the developers have decided to drop the innovative backgrounds in favor of full 3D ones,

in order to have more control over the camera. However, the underlying naughty atmosphere and the impressively violent action has all been retained. Players will be able to take on the role of four characters: Hana, Rain, Glas, and Deke. **STEPHEN FROST**

THE BUZZ

Can this sequel push the boundaries of the ESRB even further? Let's hope so.

GAME INFO PUB INFOGRAMES | DEV EDEN STUDIOS | MAX PLAYERS ONE | RELEASE DATE Q4 2004 | ESRB TEEN

In a world composed of countless huge islands that float through the atmosphere, the evil Brazul has magically transformed a peaceful tribe

called the Nativs into a vicious army of canine minions known as Wolfen. It's up to you, as the leaping, sneaking, karate-kicking, boomerang-throwing Kya to knock them unconscious and change them back, one by one. *Kya* looks beautiful and feels fresh, thanks to a robust fighting engine, rideable animals, the ability to

ONLY IN
PSM
NEW SCREENS

KYA

tip-toe past enemies, and best of all: huge wind currents that crisscross all over the shattered game world, and which the player can ride—very cool.

ERIC BRATCHER

THE BUZZ

An almost *Rayman*-pretty platformer with lots of combat action and some new ideas.



Defeated wolfen return to the Nativ village and open shops, enabling you to buy new abilities and power-ups.

◀ Kya does a lot of snowboarder-like grinding, and even rides the wind, either gliding like an eagle or freefalling.

GAME INFO PUB SONY CEA | DEV NAUGHTY DOG | MAX PLAYERS ONE | RELEASE DATE FALL | DEV TEEN

▶ Above all, this is the game that Naughty Dog has been wanting to create for a long, long time.

▼ There are almost as many polygons in just Dax's face than were in his entire body in the past game.



JAK II

ONLY IN
PSM
NEW SCREENS

We already spilled the beans on Naughty Dog's latest platformer last issue, but that's not preventing us from scooping the competition with this brand-new (and exclusive) screenshot from the eagerly anticipated

title. From the visual perspective down to the gameplay, the Santa Monica-based developers are striving to make this sequel a true step ahead of anything else out there. The change to a Teen rating will allow for more mature content and situations, which means the standard Disney routine has completely been thrown out the window. This is a game that should definitely cater to all platform fans out there. **STEPHEN FROST**

THE BUZZ

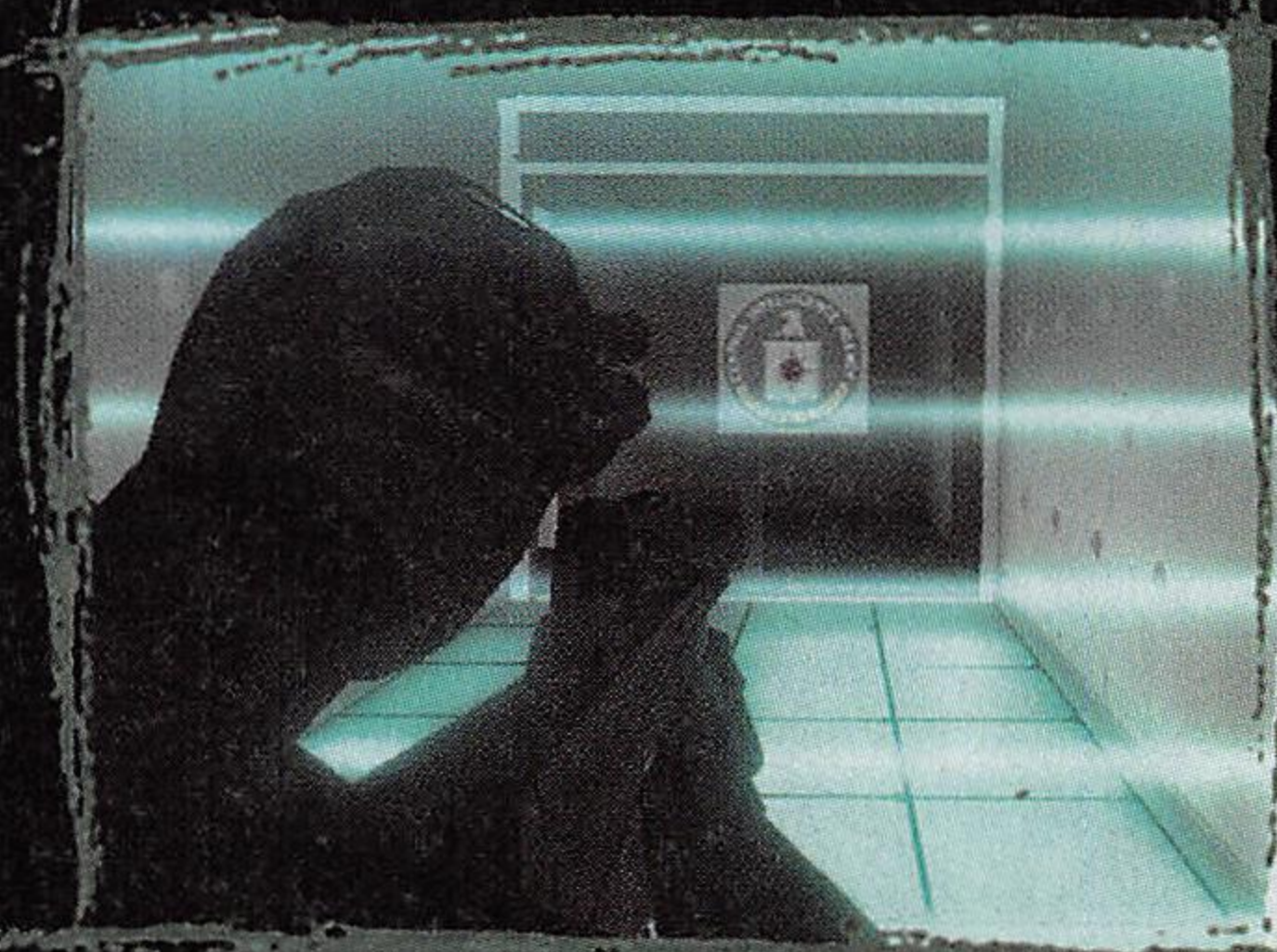
There's no denying the quality of Naughty Dog's games. This one will be their best yet.

"Game of the year."

Gamespy.com ~ Xbox Game of the Year

"The best Xbox game of 2002."

Entertainment Weekly ~ A-score



PLAYSTATION®2
COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM SCREENS SHOWN

"Don't hesitate to buy this amazing game."

Electronic Gaming Monthly ~ Editor's Choice Gold Award



PLAYSTATION®2
COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM SCREENS SHOWN

"Truly the next generation in stealth combat."

GamePro ~ 5/5



PLAYSTATION®2
COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM SCREENS SHOWN

"9.6 highest score ever."

Official Xbox Magazine ~ Editor's Choice Award



PLAYSTATION®2
COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM SCREENS SHOWN

PlayStation®2



Blood and Gore
Violence

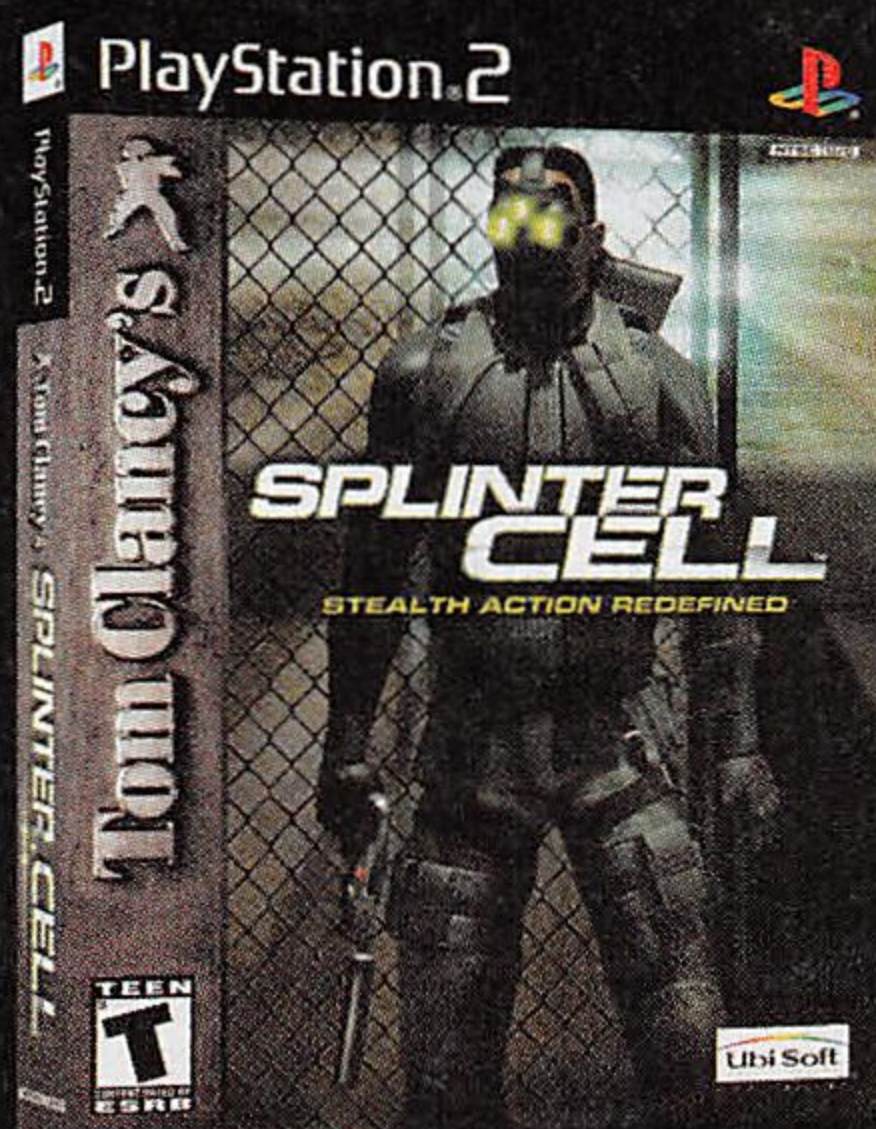
WHEN YOU'RE THIS DEADLY,
ONE PLATFORM CAN'T HOLD YOU.

★★★★★

REDEFINED FOR THE PLAYSTATION®2
COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM.

★★★★★

Redefined with all-new cinematics and four exclusive new levels, the best in stealth combat just got even deadlier. Thermal goggles, prototype guns, and the ability to use your enemies as human shields are just a few of the weapons and tactics in your arsenal. You have been entrusted to protect America's freedoms. You are Sam Fisher. You are a Splinter Cell.



Ubi Soft
ENTERTAINMENT
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**SPLINTER
CELL**™

www.splintercell.com

STRATEGY

90 Auto Modellista



86 Midnight Club II

90 PSM Challenge

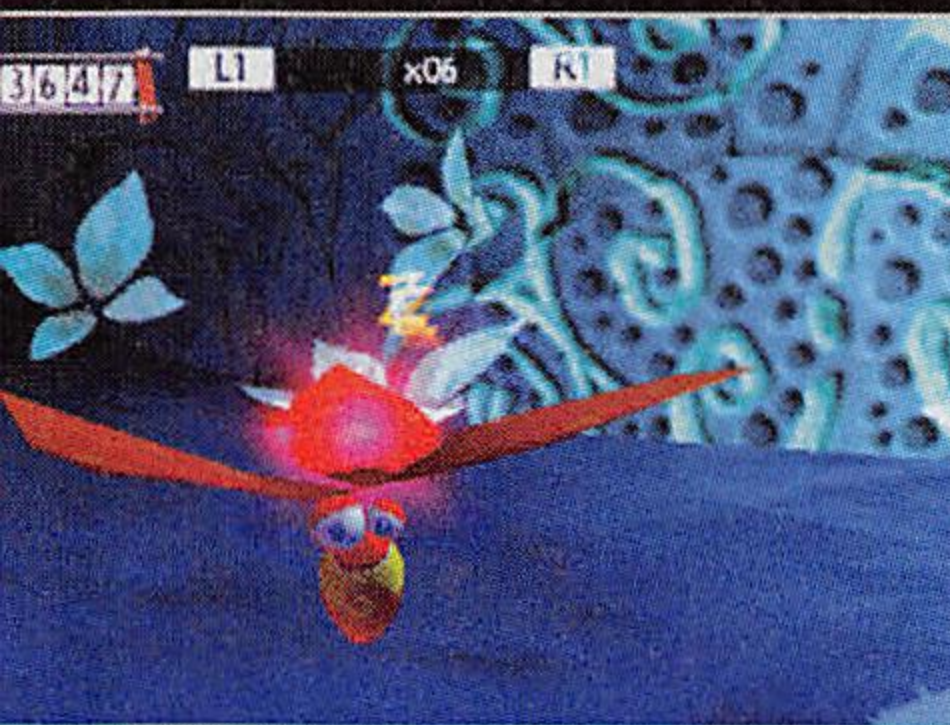
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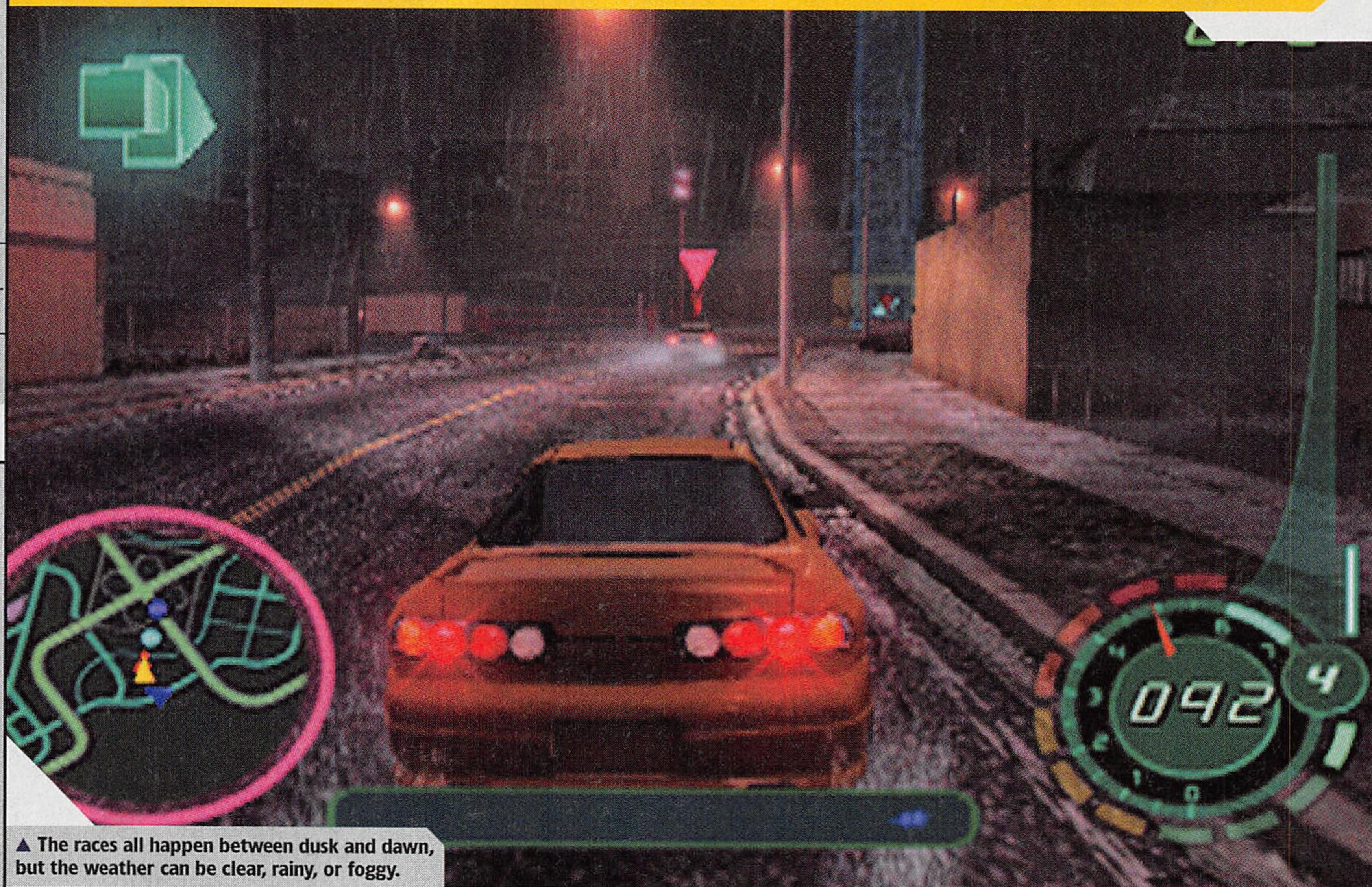


Pedal To The Metal! The Getaway, p. 88



MIDNIGHT CLUB II

Strategies and secrets straight from the dev team!



▲ The races all happen between dusk and dawn, but the weather can be clear, rainy, or foggy.

Rules Of The Road

Don't fight the power

Slowing down to take turns is for suckers. Power-slide by handbraking **LB** through turns to avoid loss of velocity.

Handbrake burnout

To burst out of a standstill with authority, hold down the handbrake **LB** and press the gas. When the meter tops out and turns red, release the handbrake. This is especially useful to do right after you damage out. You can also turn in place while burning out, but keep an eye on the redline damage this causes.

Raging Reversal

The key to doing hot 180's is to be cruising at top speed, then slam the stick left or right and hold down the brake. It looks sweet, and becomes incredibly useful as you progress through the game. You can also hold down reverse, apply the handbrake, and turn.

Fly like an eagle

When in the air, hold down the weight transfer button **RB**. This by itself will self adjust your roll. Continue to hold down the weight transfer button, and you can use the stick to adjust your pitch and yaw.

Two-wheeled tricks

While driving, hold down **LB** and turn left or right—you'll pop up onto two wheels. Continue to hold the weight transfer button as you maneuver the car. Releasing the weight transfer, braking, slowing down too much, or a collision will bring the vehicle back down. Riding on two wheels helps you avoid traffic in narrow alleyways and just looks damn stylish.

Subtle Strategy

Gas Station Pumps

Clip one of these while trimming the fat off that final curve and you can kiss your car goodbye. Nudge an opponent into a pump, though—now that's sublime strategy.

Traffic lights

Hastily speeding through intersections against red traffic lights is just asking for a high-speed collision. Mastering the art of catching the green should be part of your repertoire.

Slip Stream Turbo

Line up in the wake of the car ahead of you, watching air streams and listening for draft noise. Stay in this sweet spot 'til the

meter turns red, then hit the turbos to rocket ahead of your opponent with blinding speed.

Fishtailing Foes

Losing control at a critical moment can ruin an entire race; however, carefully executed collision tactics can force an opponent to fishtail, enabling you to slip away.



▲ Your slipstream turbo can put you in front of this guy in a hurry, but get onto a straightaway before pulling the trigger.

Cycling Specifics

Lean into it

Hold the down the weight transfer button and steer left or right. This will make a sharper turn. This is the preferred method for turning instead of handbrake 'drifting'.

<< SLOWING DOWN TO TAKE TURNS IS FOR SUCKERS >>

Tuck it in, stand it up

While driving, hold down the weight transfer button and push forward on the left stick. This is a "tuck", which will increase the top speed of the bike by reducing drag. Then, apply the normal brake to do an endo/nosie/stoppie

Back-wheel boosting

While driving, hold down the weight transfer button and pull back on the left stick. This will boost your speed by 20mph, but too much pull back will cause the rider to fall off. Push forward or release the weight transfer button to return the bike to normal.



▲ The weight transfer button is the key to cycling—it enables you to turn on a dime, and even pop wheelies and stoppies.

Additional Cool Things In MC2

With a fast enough car and some skill, use a turbo off Le Louvre in Paris and hold **LB** to perform a full backward or forward flip.

When you see a 'P' parking sign or blinking con-

struction equipment, look for an alley or shortcut. There are also lots of barriers that can be crashed through, so make sure you keep your eyes open and experiment.

The quickest entrance to the catacombs in Paris is south of the Eiffel Tower. There is an entire network of underground tunnels—just hug the walls to avoid hitting the support beams.

You can get into the underground system in Tokyo by breaking through the wood blockades near the river moving through the center of town.

In multiplayer battle modes, always try for the Reverse Steering power-up. It's devastating to your opponent.

Make sure and look for the quick shortcut that cuts through the industrial area of Los Angeles. It's up a ramp and over a rooftop; it will save you a lot of time.

Don't bother following an enemy to learn his route: they'll be different almost every time.

If you are racing in Paris on bike, do a wheelie and then ride directly at the front of one of the small cars. Instead of flying off the bike, you'll jump right over the car!

If you're racing a car against bikes, burn out off the line and slam into as many bikers as quickly as you can. Those whom you knock off their bikes will likely recover too far behind to compete.

You can create custom online games. Here's one the dev team really likes: have a few friends choose muscle cars (the 1971 Bestia), and one person choose a bike. The biker simply tries to escape the muscle cars, which attempt to run him/her over.



▲ Looks like the police aren't big fans of illegal street racing. What's up with that?



▲ Motorcycles are tougher to drive, but far more maneuverable, which is nice when someone sends a streetlight flying.

Tearing Up The Town

The dev team talks about their favorite race in each city.

L.A.

Cheaters Never Win w/ Citi Turbo Opponent: Angel

You definitely need to know your way around the city—simply following the arrow and sticking to the roads won't work here. Be alert and aware so you can find new paths.

Also, make sure you save your nitro until after you get to the U-turn checkpoint and are heading down the long straightaway. Use your NOS down the straightaway and try to maintain your speed as you break through the glass of the building in front of you. This will set up a great set of shortcuts to follow.

Once through the building, head towards the arena and hug the wall, then hang to the right of the parking structure, through another set of glass windows. If you take both short-cuts correctly, this will help you

gain a lead. For the rest of the race, play it safe. Stick to the map and don't the arrow literally, because the winding, confusing roads through Watts may fool you.

Paris

Rooftops Vistas with Jersey XS. Opponent: Blog

This race will blow players away with its intense speed and huge air! There are a couple things to keep in mind, especially since this is one of the first races to introduce players to Paris. The key to remember in this race is to use your **LB** button to control yourself in the air, especially when you attempt enormous jumps (style tip: you can actually do a complete flip off the ramp by the Pompidou).

Also, in this race, it is wise to follow the

arrow at each checkpoint as they generally point you towards the proper route.

One last note on this race: when you get about halfway through, there is a point where players can fork right and go through the underground highway system. Do so—it's ultimately faster.

Tokyo

Karma Rising with the Nousagi. Opponent: Zen

This is the coolest motorcycle race in the game, bar none. It's incredibly fast, and extremely difficult because players have to contend with both the city streets and the freeways,

sometimes driving into oncoming traffic.

The other notable challenge here is the length of the race. Clocking in at over 4 minutes, it takes an immense amount of concentration. Always remember to use **LB** to help negotiate turns, as this sort of precision can be the very key to a victory. It's tempting to keep pressing on the gas because you want to maintain top speed, but be smart. If it'll put you in a better position when coming out of the turn, don't be afraid to slightly lay off the gas and tap the brakes now and then.

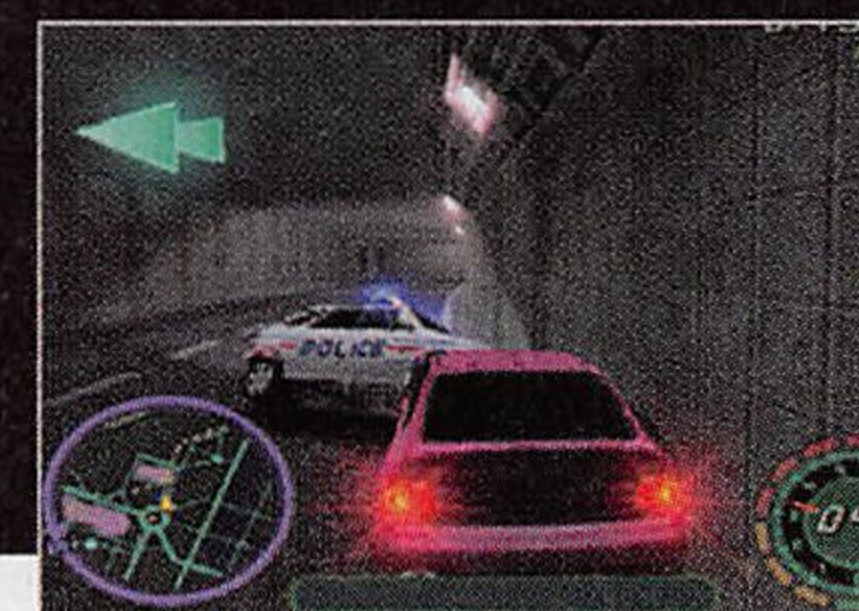
▼ Always learn your way around the city—some of these shortcuts are awesome!



▼ This is clearly not the Los Angeles Staples Center—there's far too much available parking.



▼ Paris is full of underground passageways. Unfortunately, the cops are aware of them.



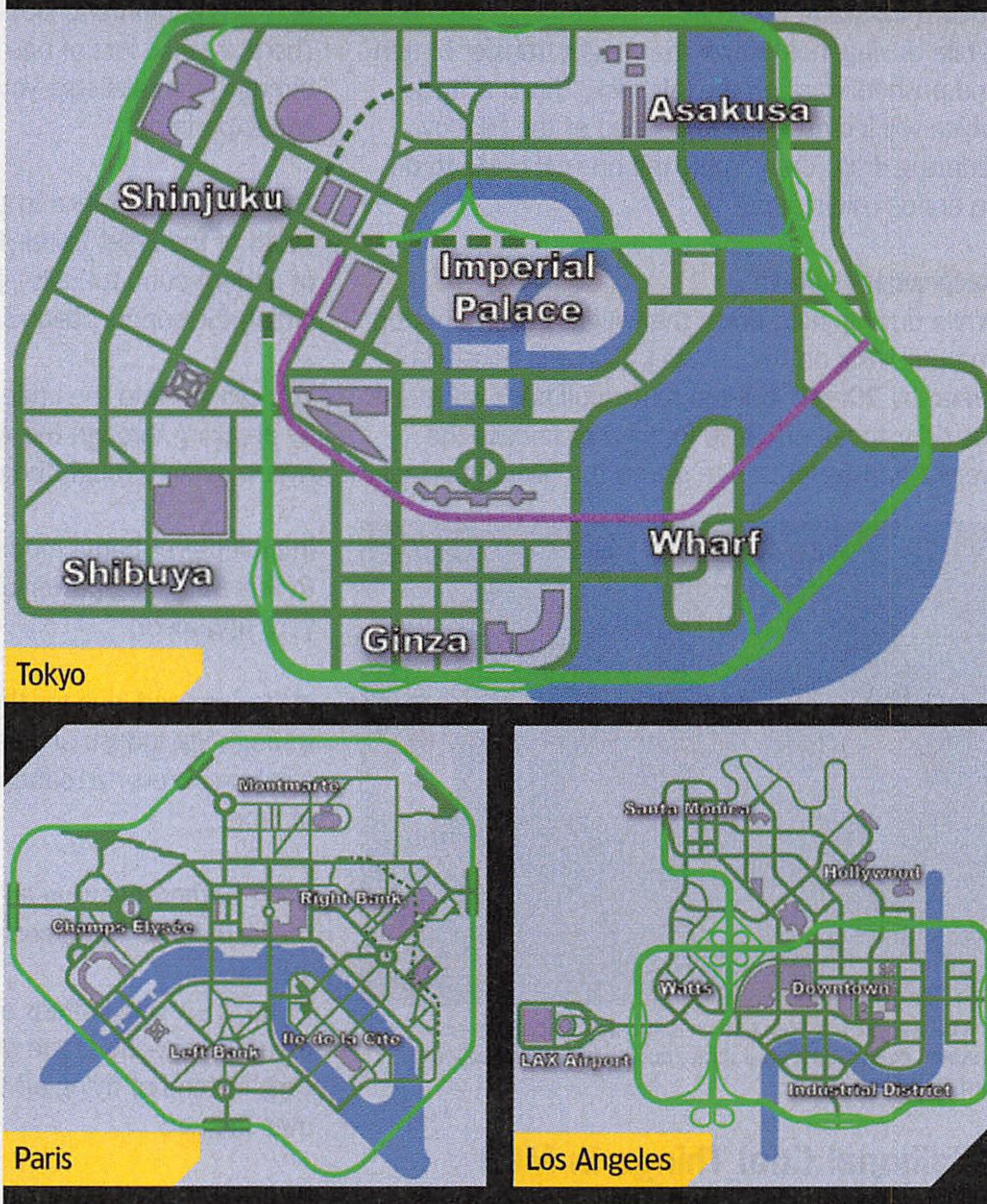
Redline Racing

Our man inside Rockstar "borrowed" this top-secret document for us, which compares the top speeds of each car. Note: "untucked" means you're on a cycle and sitting straight up. If you tuck, you'll get a slight speed boost.

LA	Car	Top Speed	Driven by
	Cocotte	138.51	you (default)
	Citi	138.98	Moses
	Emu	156.73	Steven
	Torrída	147.42	Maria
	Interna	149.52	Angel
	1971 Bestia	158.48	Angel
	Citi Turbo	163.26	Gina
	Cohete (untucked)	145.47	Gina
	Monstruo	171.30	Hector
	Jersey XS	165.00	Dice
Paris	Boost	182.01	Blog
	Alarde	159.36	Stephane
	Schneller V8	208.43	Primo
	Fripon X	173.58	Ian
	Monsoni (untucked)	148.45	Ian
	Stadt	159.42	Farid
	Victory	168.22	Farid
	Bryanston V	189.62	Twins
	Modo Prego	190.27	Parfiat
Tokyo	RSMC 15	199.45	Shing
	Lusso XT	226.85	Shing
	Vortex 5	177.09	Ricky
	Nousagi (untucked)	160.00	Zen
	Saikou	194.42	Haley
	Knight	183.12	Nikko
	Saikou XS	205.56	Ken'ichi
	Torque JX	217.50	Makoto

Map-tastic!

It's sometimes tough to plan out your route when you can only see a little chunk of the city in your map at any given time. Here's a look at the entirety of each city's roadways.



CODES

AMPLITUDE

Codes are entered at title screen

Special Graphics Efx

L3 L3 L3 L3 R3 R3 R3 R3 L3

Scramble Gem Positions

⊗ ⊗ ← ← R3 R3 → →

MVP BASEBALL 2003

Broken Bats

Create a player with any of these names, and his bat will break anytime he hits the ball.

Keegn Patersn, Jacob Patersn, Ziggy Patersn

Home Run

Create a player with the name Erik Kiss, every one of his hits will be a homer.

16:9 Anamorphic display

Hold **△** and **□** for more than three seconds, then (while still holding them) press **←** to enable and **→** to disable.

THE GETAWAY

Codes entered during the opening cinema (before pressing **START** or **△** to move to the main menu screen). A scream will sound and the screen will flash yellow to signal the code worked. Entering the code again will turn the code off.

Double Health

Infinite Ammo

Unlock Bonus Features **△△△←△△△△←△**

(cannot be turned off)

Enable Armored Car's gun

during Mission Mode

↑↓←→△△
(fire with L3)

DEAD TO RIGHTS

On the main menu, hold **R1 R2 L1 L2** and enter the following codes

10,000 bullets mode

Boomstick mode

Chow Yun Jack mode

Unlock all disarms

Wussy mode

Precursor mode

Unlock all levels, mini-games, and movies

↑←↓→△
→△△△△
△△↑↑↑
△△△△→
△←△↑↓
↑↑↓↓↑
↓←↓△↓

SHOX

Start with \$10,000,000

Start a new single-player game with the name LOADED

JURASSIC PARK: OPERATION GENESIS

Cheat codes must be entered while the player is in the Default Game State (nothing selected, no menus open). Cheats with * at the end can be toggled off again.

Dial-a-Twister

Gimme some money (\$10,000)

Lots of money (\$250,000)

Budget drops to \$10

All research completed

All dinos have 100% DNA

Extinction Event

Plague Outbreak

All dinos 50% DNA

Rampage Time

Oooops! (all fences deleted)

Rocky Road (all roads deleted)

No punishment for visitor fatalities

Exodus (all visitors leave)

All visitors reach 100% satisfaction

Oh no! (All visitors die)

Increase park rating one star

Increase park rating three stars

Fossil market event occurs

Unlocks all fossil hunt regions

Crash! (crashes all rides)

Unlock all missions

Storm Free (always sunny)

Always raining

Hot One (always very hot)

No Twisters

Activates gun on jeep

All dinos given skeleton textures

All fences are high security

All fences are low security

Park is free from disease

Dinos never become stressed

←↑→↓△R1

↑△↓△

△→→△R1↓

△R1△R1↓↓

↓↓↓←→△↑

R1↑R1→△↓

△R1↓R1△

↓↑↓←R1R1R1

R1↑△↓

△△△←←←

↑△↓△←←

→→R1R1△↓

R1←↓↓↓↓*

△R1△→↓R1

R1↓△↑↑↑

←→←→R1

→△↑△△↓

△R1↓△→

↓△R1↓

←↓→↑△R1△R1

R1△↑↓↑↓

R1→→→→R1

R1R1→←↑→*

R1△R1↓↑↓*

↓△↓R1↓R1*

△R1←→△R1*

△R1←↓→→*

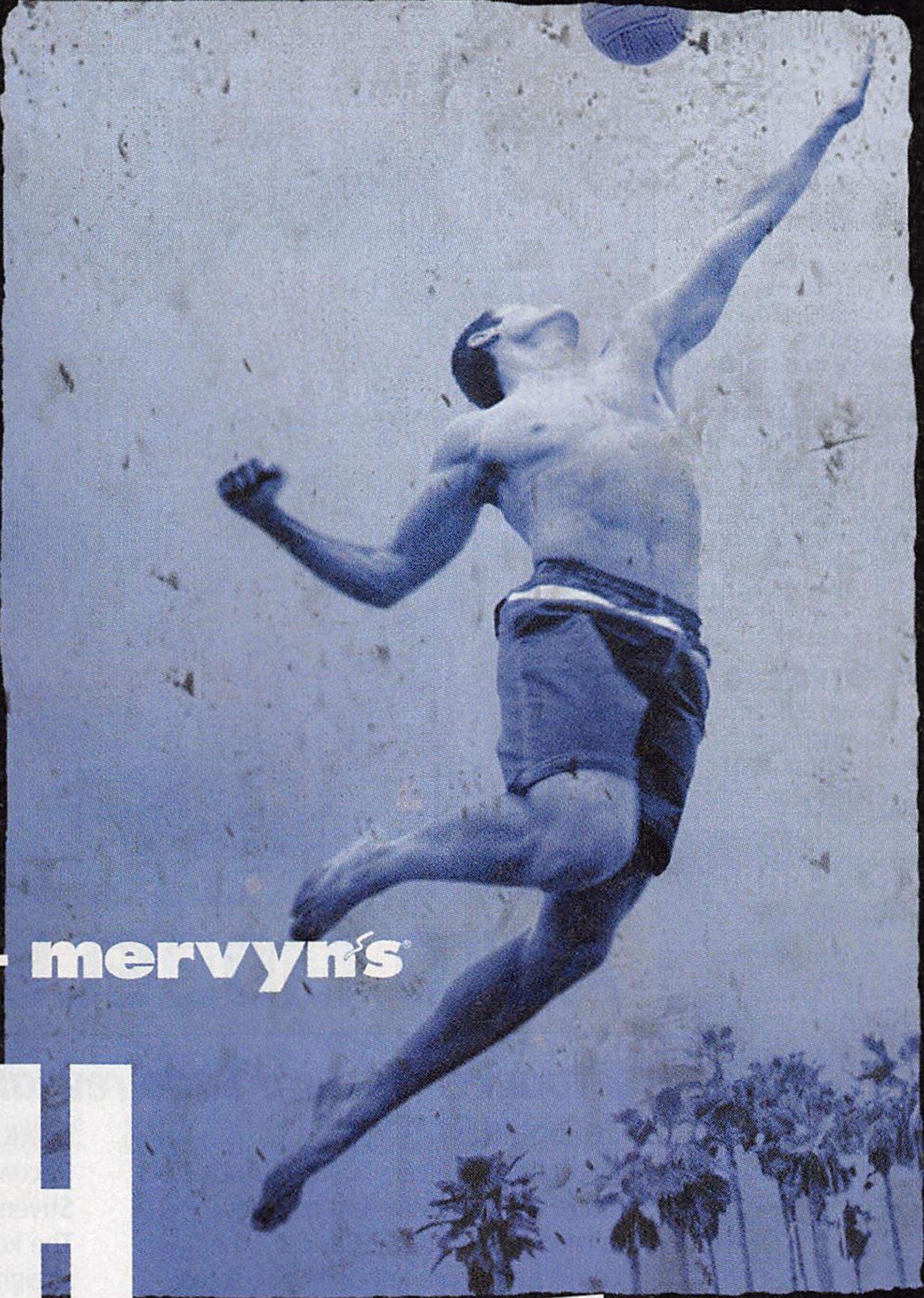
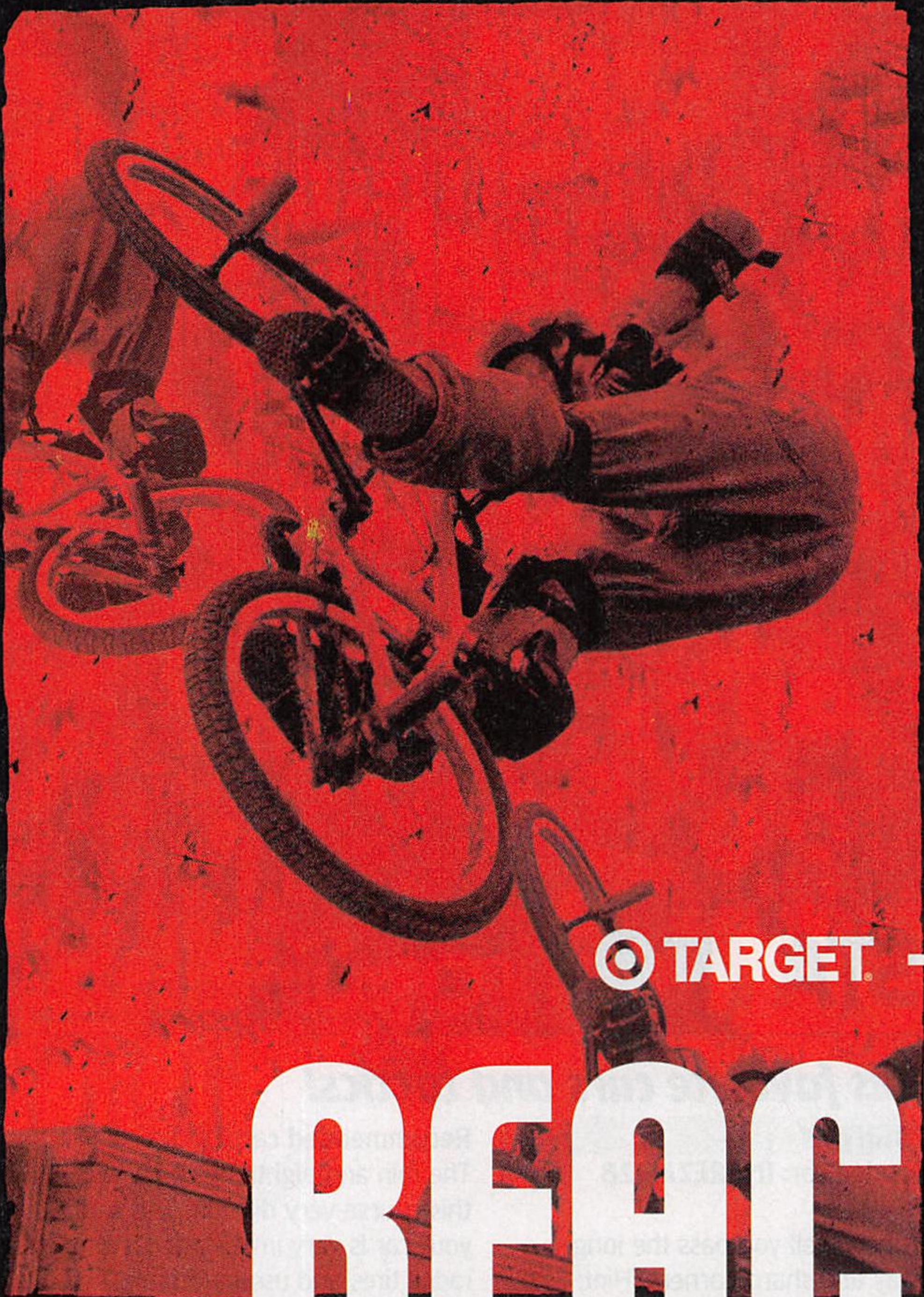
R1R1R1△→

△←←R1R1→

↓↓←→△△↑↑

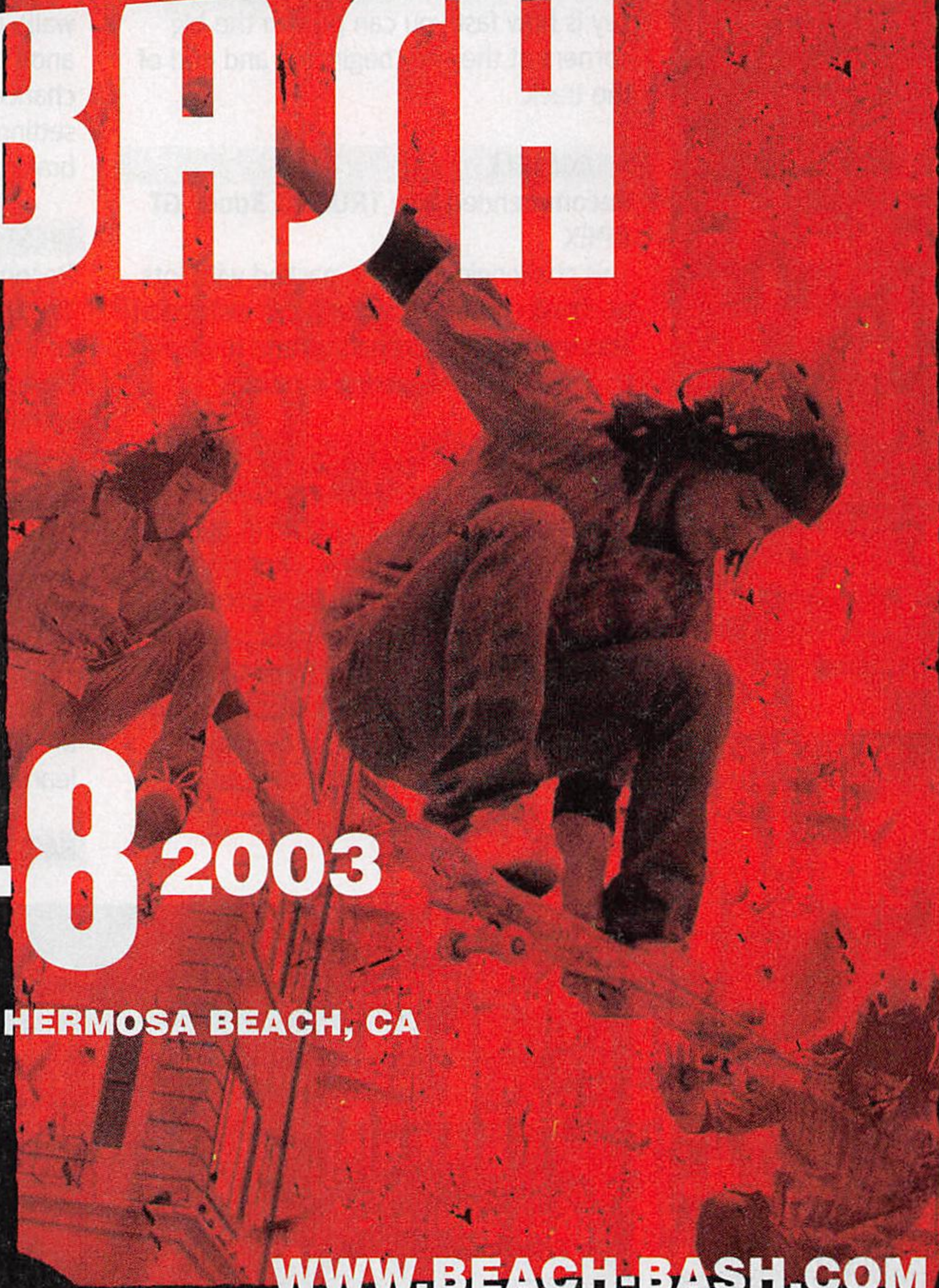
↑↑R1△↑↑

△←↑←↑←△



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BEACH BASH



JUNE 6-8 2003

HERMOSA BEACH, CA

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PlayStation 2

TAKE THE PSM CHALLENGE!

RULES You can't send an entry for each challenge. If you cheat or use codes, you'll be disqualified. The final letter for the contest will be accepted on July 1st. If there are multiple winners, the final winner will be decided by the best paragraph that explains why you're the winner. Send a picture or a videotape (non-returnable) and a short paragraph explaining why you're the winner. Sorry, no e-mail entries! This contest is open only to readers living in the United States, age 18 years or older. PSM reserves the right to substitute prizes of equal or greater monetary value, if necessary.

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO:
PSM June Challenge # (the challenge you're entering)
c/o Future Network USA, 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005.

THE CHALLENGES

Challenge #1: Auto Modellista

Race the Akagi Hill, East Tokyo (rain), and U.S. Dirt tracks with any car. Photograph or videotape your times. The fastest combined score will be the winner.

Challenge #2: Color Quest

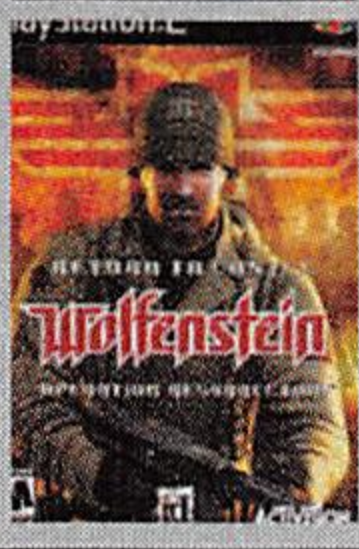
Create a doodle that showcases the PSM logo — it could be a tattoo, it could be the doodle's actual body...whatever. Photograph or videotape your creation, and we'll choose a favorite.

Challenge #3: Primal

This one's simple: just beat the game, and photograph or videotape the ending.

THIS MONTH'S PRIZE PACKAGE

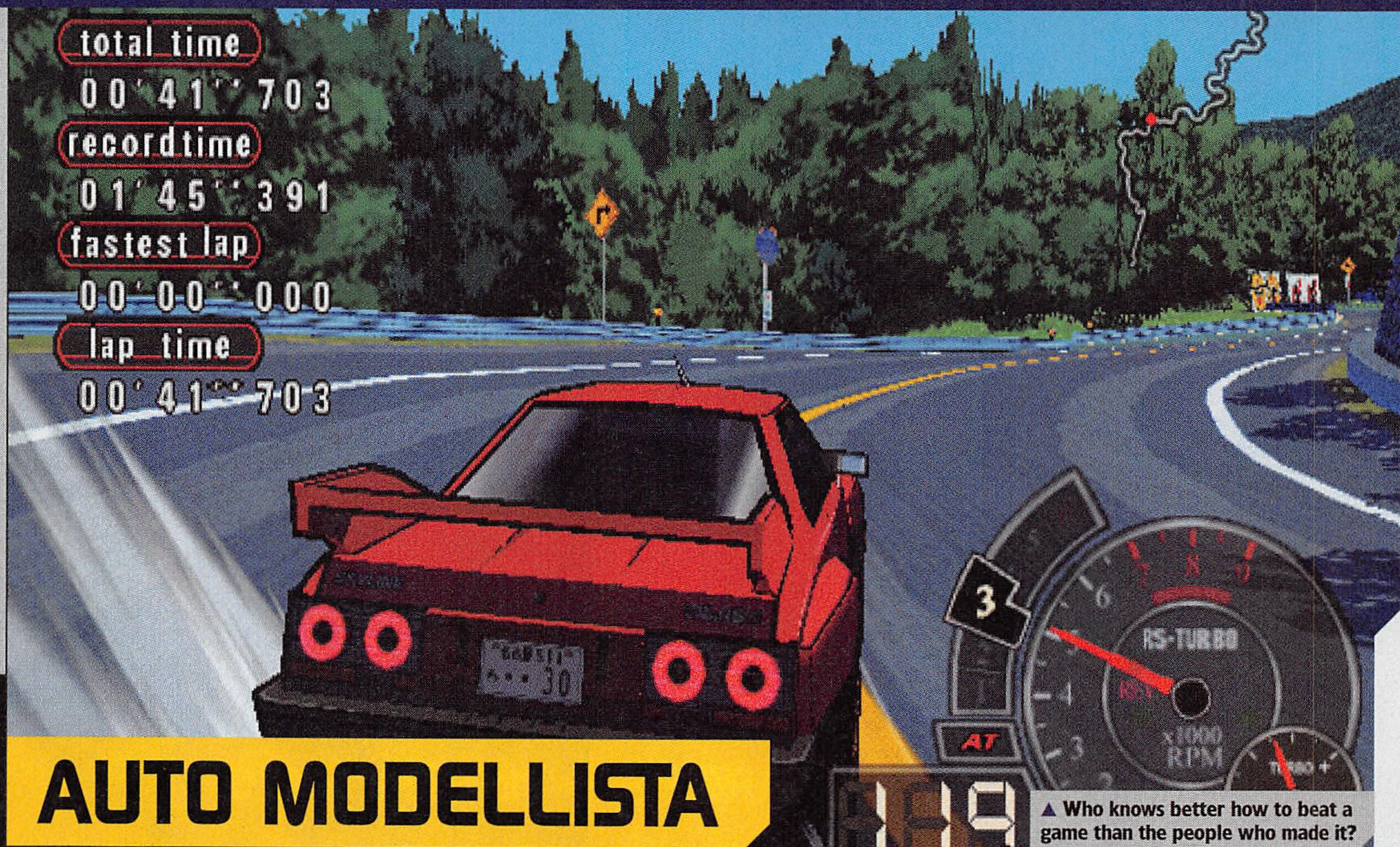
Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Operation Resurrection game
X-2 Wolverine's Revenge game
16 Volt CD (Primal soundtrack)



PLUS,
a randomly
chosen
(yet still cool)
t-shirt!

FEBRUARY WINNERS

Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance
Linda Figuccio (Linda: please email Eric with your mailing address at ebratcher@futurenetworkusa.com)
War of the Monsters
Mark Falkey, Falls Church, VA
Rygar
D. Monteforte, Stroudsburg, PA



AUTO MODELLISTA

▲ Who knows better how to beat a game than the people who made it?

Producer Yoshiro Sudo reveals his favorite cars and tactics!

ROKKO HILL

Recommended car: TOMMYKAIRA ZZ-S

There are successive fast and slow corners on this track. Basically, the corners alternate left and right, so you have to drive with a sense of rhythm. The key is how fast you can go into the big corners at the very beginning and end of the track.

AKAGI HILL

Recommended car: TRUENO 3door GT APEX

This challenging track is packed with lots of sharp corners. Choose a car with good acceleration and cornering, and realize that skillful maneuvering is crucial.

SUZUKA CIRCUIT

Recommended car: NSX typeS-Zero

This is the most famous circuit in Japan and a very technical track. After the long straight, there are some sharp corners. Focus upon good braking and cornering as fast as possible. The key point is the 130R corner. If you tune your car so that you can clear this corner at over 190 m.p.h. with no brakes, your time will be shortened significantly.

OSAKA HIGHWAY

Recommended car: IMPREZA 22B Stiversion

The key is how well you pass the long straightaway and sharp corners (Hint: brake properly and strive not to touch the wall). On the straightaway, get behind another car (slip stream) and wait for a chance to pass it. I would recommend a setting with focus on the max speed and braking right before corners.

WEST TOKYO

Recommended car: VIPER GTS

The track is pretty simple and not so difficult as the mountain pass tracks. However, since it is a nighttime race, it's sometimes hard to see the corners. Try to learn how to corner with as much speed as possible, especially at the corner right before the goal—it is the key to victory.

EAST TOKYO

Recommended car: CORVETTE

Timing your braking is the secret to victory here. It is very important to use slick tires and "Hard" brake settings. Practice to learn the perfect braking points.

EAST TOKYO (RAIN)

Recommended car: ZZ-S

The rain and nighttime conditions make this course very difficult. The settings of your car is very important. Use sports radial tires and use hard brake settings. Also the max speed is important.

US DIRT TRACK

Recommended car: LANCER EVOLUTION TOMMI MAKINEN EDITION

Since this is a slippery dirt track, a 4WD car will have an advantage. The key is to corner without using the brake as much as possible.

US SPEEDWAY

Recommended car: CASPITA

Max speed is the most important. I would recommend a setting that allows you to reach the max speed without any loss on the straightaway. It would be ideal if you can reach the max speed right in front of the braking point before the corner.

TAMIYA CIRCUIT

Recommended car: SUBARU YOUNG SS

On this track, all the car specs will become the same. It would be best to keep the shortest line, and in online races, use "slip stream" to draft your opponents.

2003 GameShark® Contest Winners

Some readers may have been wondering about the GameShark contest on page 55 of our 2003 CodeBook. Here are our happy winners. Congratulations, everyone!

GRAND PRIZE WINNER

Adrian Camarillo - Fontana, CA

1st Prize Winners

Scott Burrill - Stoughton, WI

Josh Hopkins - Chester, VA

Steven Keene - Philadelphia, PA

Malcolm McLean - Jarrell, TX

Mike Paniccia - Pittsburgh, PA

2nd Prize Winners

Kevin Alvarez - Los Angeles, CA

Eric Andrews - Phoenix, AZ

Alex Bohl - Bossier City, LA

Tom Broache - Tappahannock, VA

Markus Cosme - Phoenix, AZ

Pierce Davis - Long Beach, CA

Clifton Day - Detroit, MI

Jon Duszak - Bristol, IL

Steven Forton - Garden Grove, CA

Jeremy McDonough - Rock Springs, WY

Jeff Mack - Kingwood, TX

Eric Martinez - Modesto, CA

Ethan Neal - Louisville, KY

Cameron Nichol - Waldport, OR

Juan Salinas - Countryside, IL

Bobbi Sweeney - Palatka, FL

Nick Szczepanik - Finksburg, MD

Katie Tucker - Rochester, NY

Colby Turpin - Norfolk, NE

Gregory Wooten - Laurens, SC



▲ See this little critter? Ubi Soft calls it a Tribelle, but we just call it "easy money" Bling, bling!

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOK

Track down every hidden Tribelle and Matuvu

There are two types of critters you can find for points. Matuvus (small, blue lizard/frogs) whistle if you go near them. Use Look mode to find them, and watch them until they wave at you. The Tribelles (red, three-leafed plant-critters) disappear if startled, so carefully walk or strafe up, touch them, and they should give up the points. Finally, try to be energized when you find them—it gives you double points.

Fairy Council, Area 2 (Rayman gets his hands back)

Matuvus: one

- in the 2nd room, above. If you turn round, you can see it in the large root that you jumped from.

Fairy Council, Area 3 (Rayman fights Andre)

Matuvus: four

- in the 1st room, on the ceiling, behind the pylon on the rising platform.
- on the door frame of the 2nd room (the one with the cells).
- on the right-hand wall of the room for learning curved fists.
- at the end of the map, at the level of the screw-shaped mushrooms.

Fairy Council, Area 4 (Rayman arrives at the Faeries cave)

Matuvus: two

- at the entrance to the map, on the left, above the opening.
- on the ceiling to the right in the room for the 1st rock climb.

Tribelles: two

- at the peak of the 1st rock climb.
- behind the climb between two walls in the last room.

Clearleaf Forest, Area 1 (Rayman hits the first Hoodlum camp)

Matuvus: two

- on the ceiling, next to the screw-shaped mushroom.

- in the 2nd part, at the beginning, before the bridge under the scaffolding to the left.

Clearleaf Forest, Area 2 (Rayman arrives at a Teensie village)

Matuvus: two

- in the clearing under a wooden pontoon.
- in the middle of the canyon, under an inaccessible pontoon (high up).

Tribelles: two

- at the beginning of the canyon, below, next to the ladder.
- in the middle of the canyon, in the small passage to the right that can be reached with the grapnel.

Clearleaf Forest, Area 3 (Rayman blasts through a bigger Hoodlum camp)

Matuvus: two

- in the camp yard, on the roof of the right-hand tent.
- under the platform at the very beginning of the last room.

Tribelles: two

- outside, before entering the camp. There is a small passage you can reach by jumping on the crates (on which there are some red Lums). A tribelle is waiting at the back.
- in the camp yard, on the platform from which the Hoodboom bombarded Rayman.

The Bog of Murk, Area 1 (Begoniex the Beautiful)

Matuvus: one

- outside, under the roof of Begoniex's house.

The Bog of Murk, Area 2 (A Hoodlum den)

Matuvus: one

- under one of the branches of the tree on the central island.

The Bog of Murk, Area 3 (Piranhas)

Matuvus: one

- right at the beginning, visible from the 1st small island with the

muddies and the grapnel power.

The Bog of Murk, Area 4 (Plants and Bridges)

Matuvus: one

- right at the beginning, under one of the leaves of the 1st plant.

The Bog of Murk, Area 5 (Razoff)

Matuvus: one

- on the ceiling in one of the first-floor rooms.

The Longest Shortcut, Area 1 (Catch the Shoe)

Matuvus: one

- on one of the statues of the Teensies in the room with the grapnels.

Tribelles: one

- behind the door which opens when you have all the jewels, at the back next to the switch.

The Longest Shortcut, Area 2 (Reflected platforms)

Matuvus: one

- behind the door which opens when you have all the jewels, on one of the guardrails of the stairway.

Tribelles: one

- behind the door which opens when you have all the jewels, in the center of the room.

The Longest Shortcut, Area 3 (Crown collection)

Matuvus: one

- on the statue of the Teensie which makes the water flow into the small basin in the big 1st room.

Tribelles: one

- at the end of the level, to the right, on the beach behind the barrels.

The Land of the Livid Dead, Area 1 (Arrival at the moor)

Matuvus: one

- right at the beginning of the map, on the wall behind the rocks shaped like menhirs.

The Land of the Livid Dead, Area 2 (Enemies galore)

Matuvus: one

- at the back, on the right-hand wall in the room with lots of Pick-Ups in the air.

Tribelles: one

- in the same room as the Matuvu, under the entrance.

The Land of the Livid Dead, Area 3 (Stormy weather, little shoes)

Matuvus: two

- in the trench which is in front of the ghost tower, completely to the left, near the wooden plum pick.
- after jumping down from the small ledge with the final Teensie cage (which creates a portal in the door way to the ruined tower), face the

doorway; the Matuvu is up and to the left.

The Desert of the Knaaren, Area 2 (The Statue of Leptys)

Matuvus: three

- immediately at the entrance, on the left-hand column.
- behind the left-hand column of the screw-shaped mushroom.
- hidden behind the eagle's left wing.

The Desert of the Knaaren, Area 3 (The Knaaren underground)

Matuvus: two

- next to the statue of the Knaaren in the room with the grapnel ring.
- in the corridor which leads to the room in the spiral-staircase tower.

The Desert of the Knaaren, Area 4 (The egg dispenser)

Matuvus: two

- in the room you drop into after the fall at the start, on the ceiling to the left.
- in the puzzle room where you have to carry the stone, in the dark area below.



▲ There's not much strategy to the funky loading game—just memorize your path and learn to gauge the distance on the jumps.

Hoodlum Headquarters, Area 1 (The factory)

Matuvus: two

- on the machine behind the big wheel turning in the 1st room.
- on the right-hand wall in the room with the hanging crates.

Tribelles: one

- behind the screw-shaped mushroom in the room with the hanging crates.

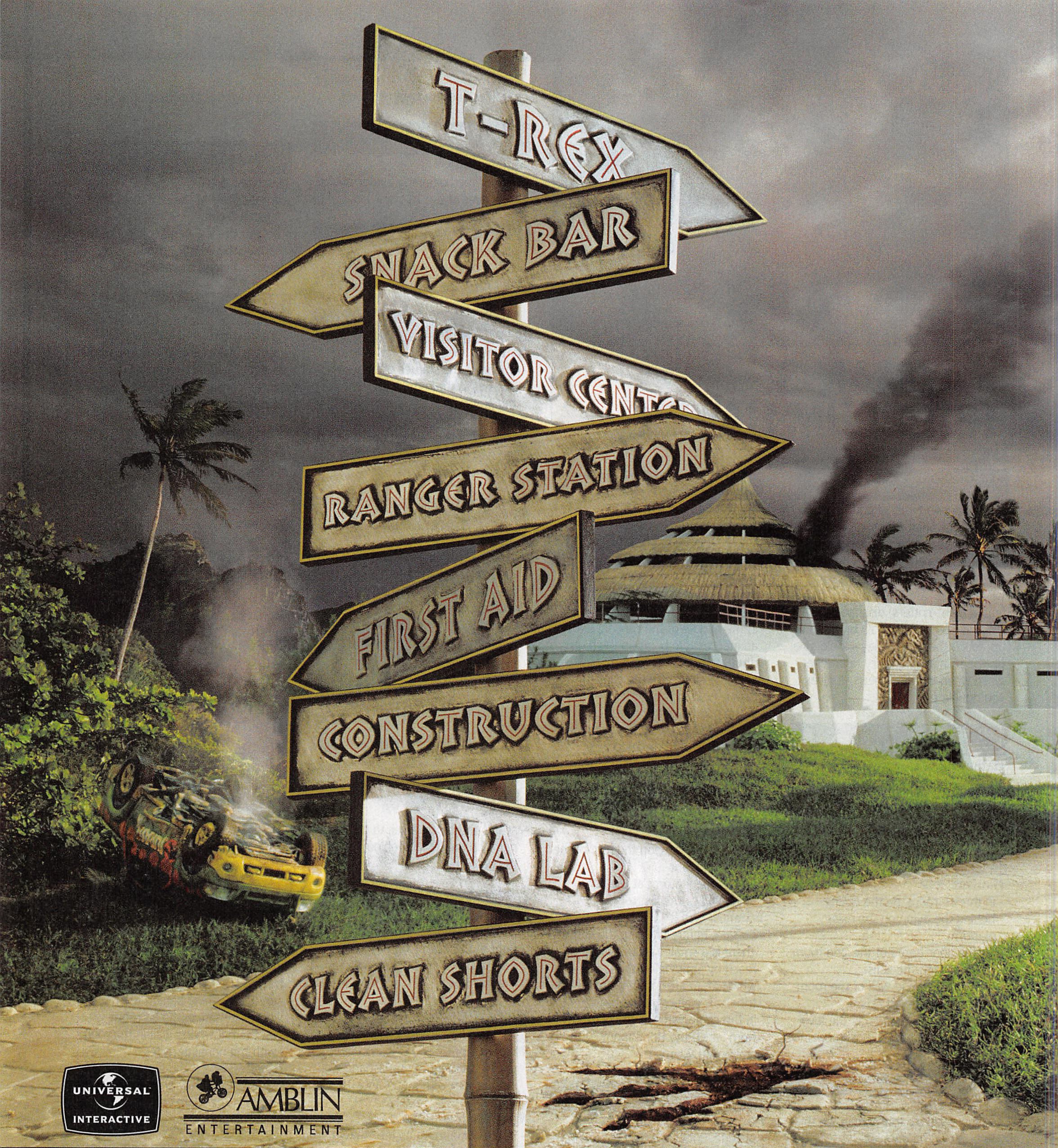
Hoodlum Headquarters, Area 2 (Hecklers and more)

Matuvus: two

- in the Heckler corridor, just before the Torpedo Fist room.
- above the small stand with the elite Hoodmonger, just in front of the shooting range.

Tribelles: one

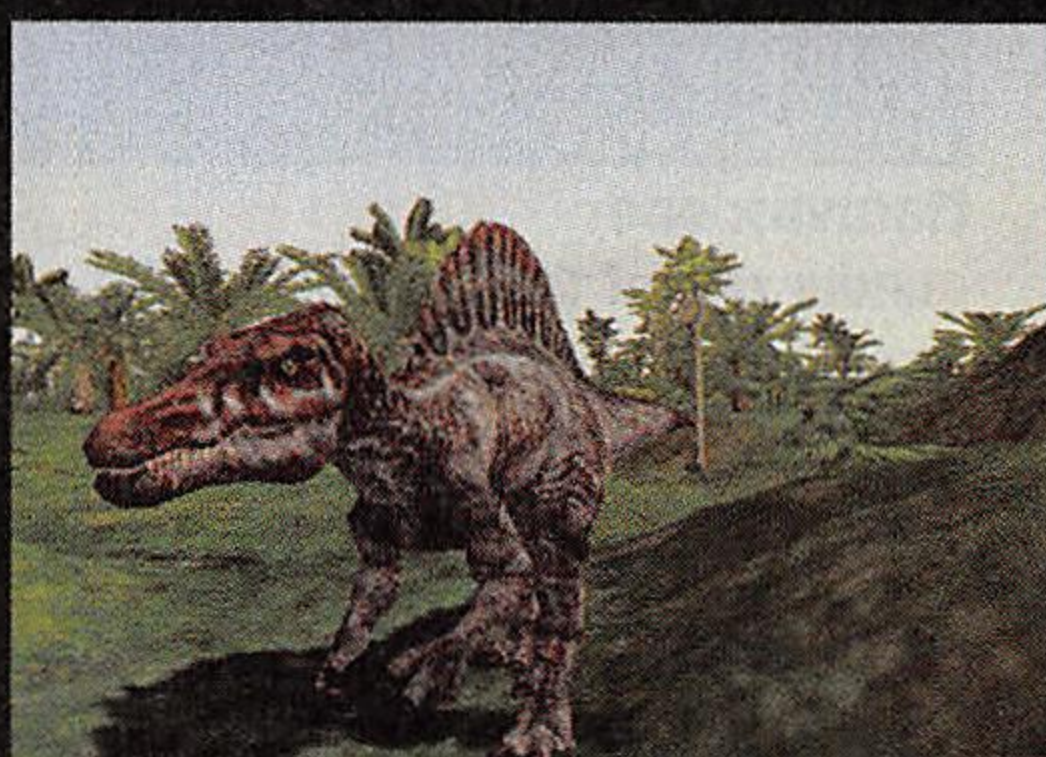
- at the back, to the left, of the Torpedo Fist room.



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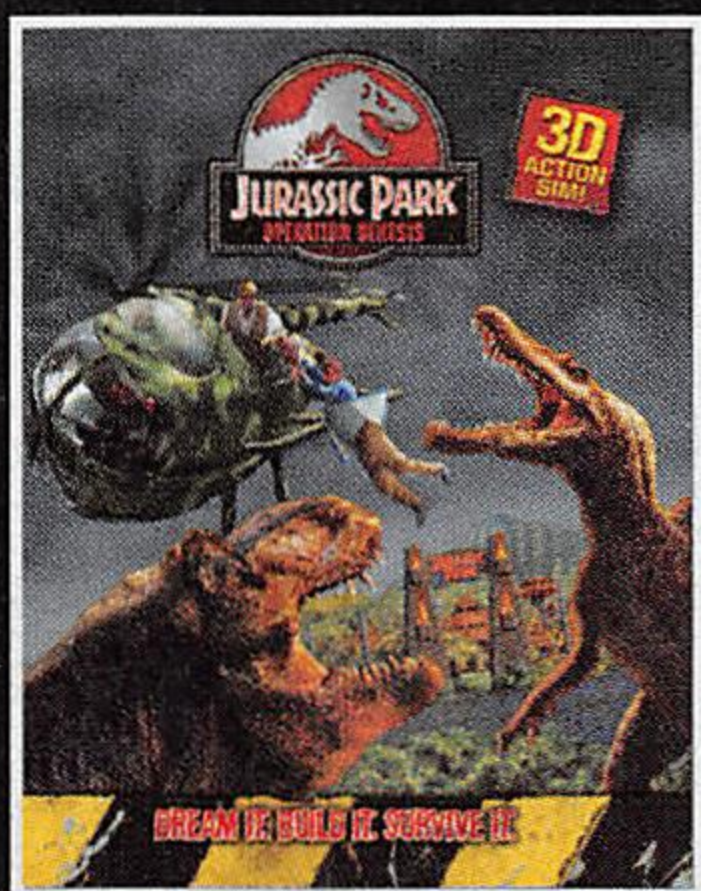
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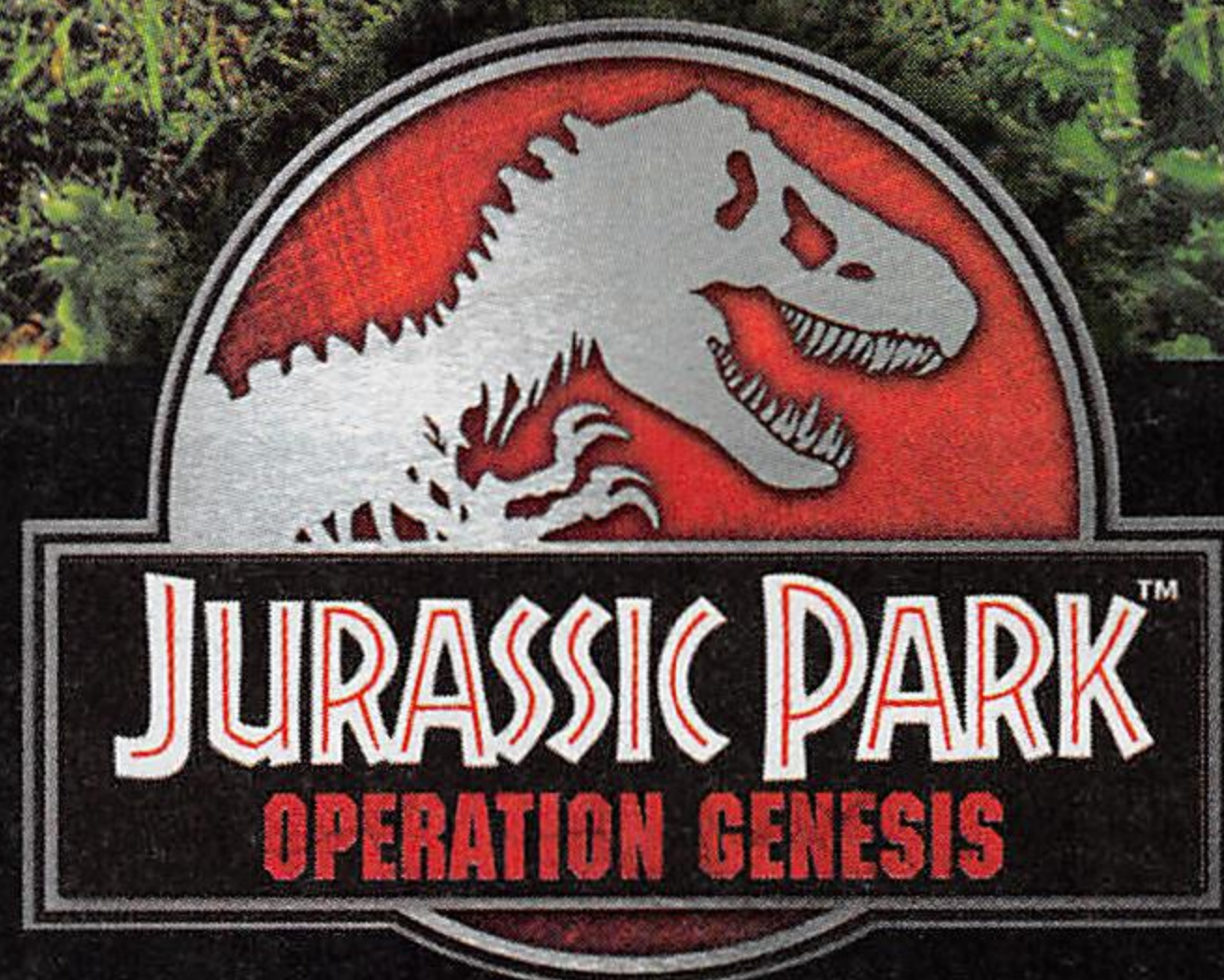
PlayStation 2



Blood
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psm@futurenetworkusa.com

LETTER OF THE MONTH



▲ Yes, we guess you could say that some PSone games, like *Bubsy 3D* here, were downright fugly!

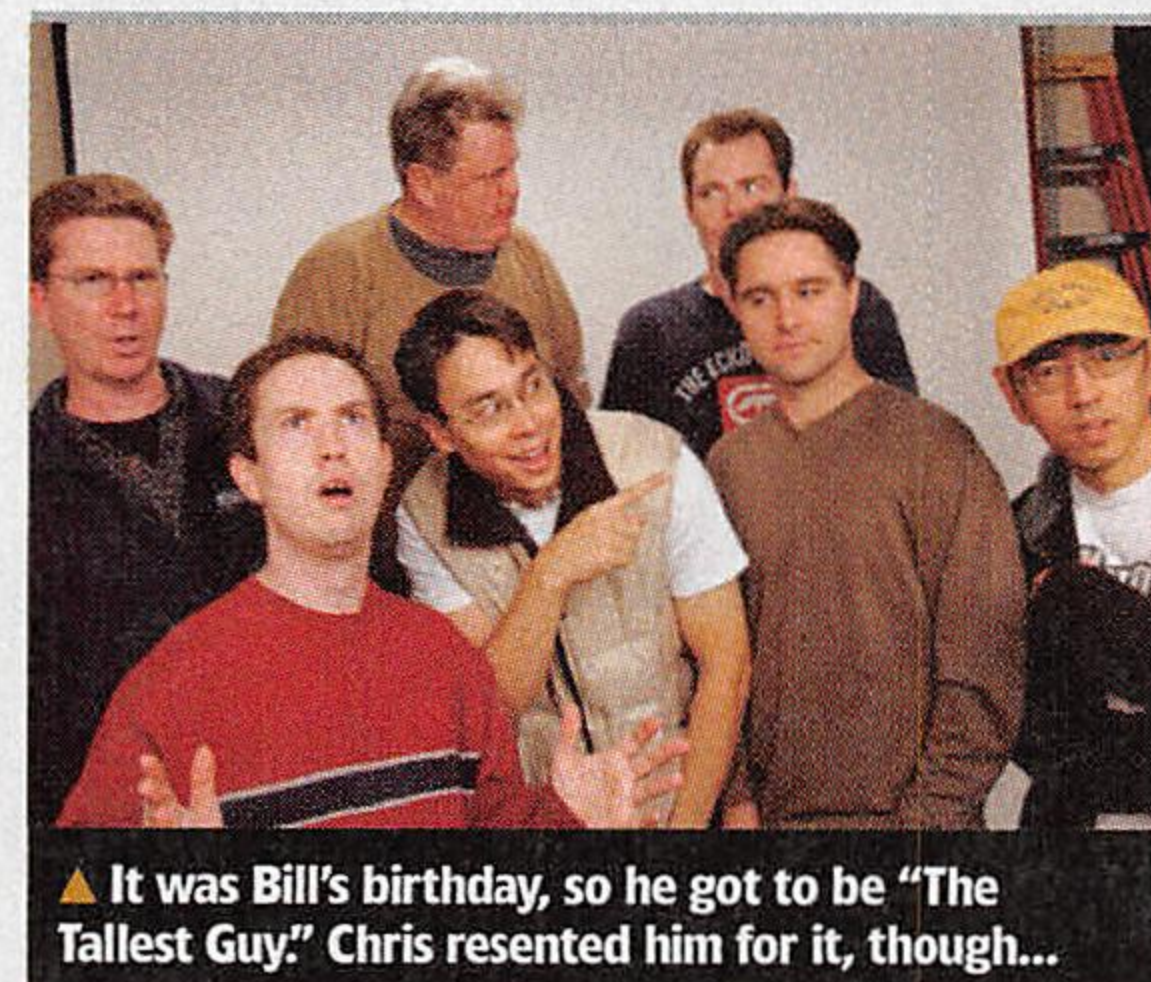
RANDY'S TIP OF THE MONTH:

"When shopping at the mall, remember that you can only hold so many things at once. It may be necessary to obtain a Bag from a shop and equip it in order to store larger items. You can equip as many as four bags at once, but remember that this will impair your stamina, speed, and strength attributes. At this point, you should find the mall exit, locate your Car and move the Bags from your inventory into your Trunk."

I've been trying to figure out why our games don't look better, more like *Star Wars*, *Toy Story*, and *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*. Okay, I'll use the PS2, since it's the only spec I know off the top of my head. It can push around 30 million polygons per second (with effects). However, each second is broken up into 60 individual frames per second. Doing some simple math, you get about 500,000 polys per frame, and that's about all we can really process mentally. So, wouldn't this mean that while the machine is drawing a jillion triangles per second, we're really only getting a tiny fraction of that number, visually speaking? No wonder PSone games looked so fugly after a while.

Mark Buckingham, Prime0101@aol.com

RANDY To answer your overall question, it's a combination of technical things, but it mainly boils down to the amount of time involved in programming an engine that can really push the PS2 and the 3D models, textures, etc. to back it up. But you also have to factor in the multitude of things the PS2 must handle "behind the scenes" that detract from polygon-pushing potential: things like enemy AI, interactive environments, and object physics. Developers like Naughty Dog spend years researching an engine, doing the art, and finding a good balance between visual quality and AI/physics in their games. A lot of developers don't have that much time, so they have to do the best with what they have.



▲ It was Bill's birthday, so he got to be "The Tallest Guy." Chris resented him for it, though...

Street Fightin' Man

UFC Tapout 2 was seemingly weeks away from release, and all of a sudden I read on the Internet that future *UFC* games (starting with *Tapout 2*) are no longer going to be published by Crave Games, but instead by TDK Mediactive. What in the heck happened? Are the rumors true that Crave is shutting down entirely and that they sold the rights to TDK? I can't imagine *UFC* management having a choice in the matter and saying, "Let's leave our franchise in the hands of TDK! They're known for quality videogames!" Needless to say, this has got my panties all in a bunch as a hardcore *UFC* fan and videogame fan, so please respond as soon as you can.

Ivan Trembow,
ivan42@salt.net

ERIC Crave has been doing some restructuring, and while the company hasn't completely disintegrated, it has rebuilt itself as a bargain games publisher, and given several of its big-budget properties (including the *UFC* license) to other publishers in the process. However, TDK is on the rise after *Robotech: Battlecry*, so we're optimistic that they'll take good care of *UFC*. Incidentally, *UFC Tapout 2* is an Xbox game, but our sources tell us that a PS2-only *UFC Throwdown 2* is on the way as well.

The Thrill Is Gone...

I was incredibly hurt when *Thrill Kill* was dropped

TalkBACK

EACH MONTH we post a new question on our website at psmonline.com, and print the best answers here in our Letters section. Give PSM a piece of your mind!

This Month's Question Was:
"What do you most look forward to see happen at this year's E3?"

Hopefully, we'll get a first look at the new *Metal Gear Solid*.

Daniel Basulto, San Antonio, TX

Am I the only one looking forward to the next *Hooters* game?

Gil Medina, Philadelphia, PA

I really enjoyed *Deus Ex: The Conspiracy*

and nothing would make me happier than to hear that *DX: The Invisible War* is being made for PS2!

David Fuqua, Montgomery, AL

I'm looking forward to *Metal Gear Solid 3!!!* It had such a big impact at the 2001 E3 that I became obsessed with the whole stealth genre. I was disappointed that it

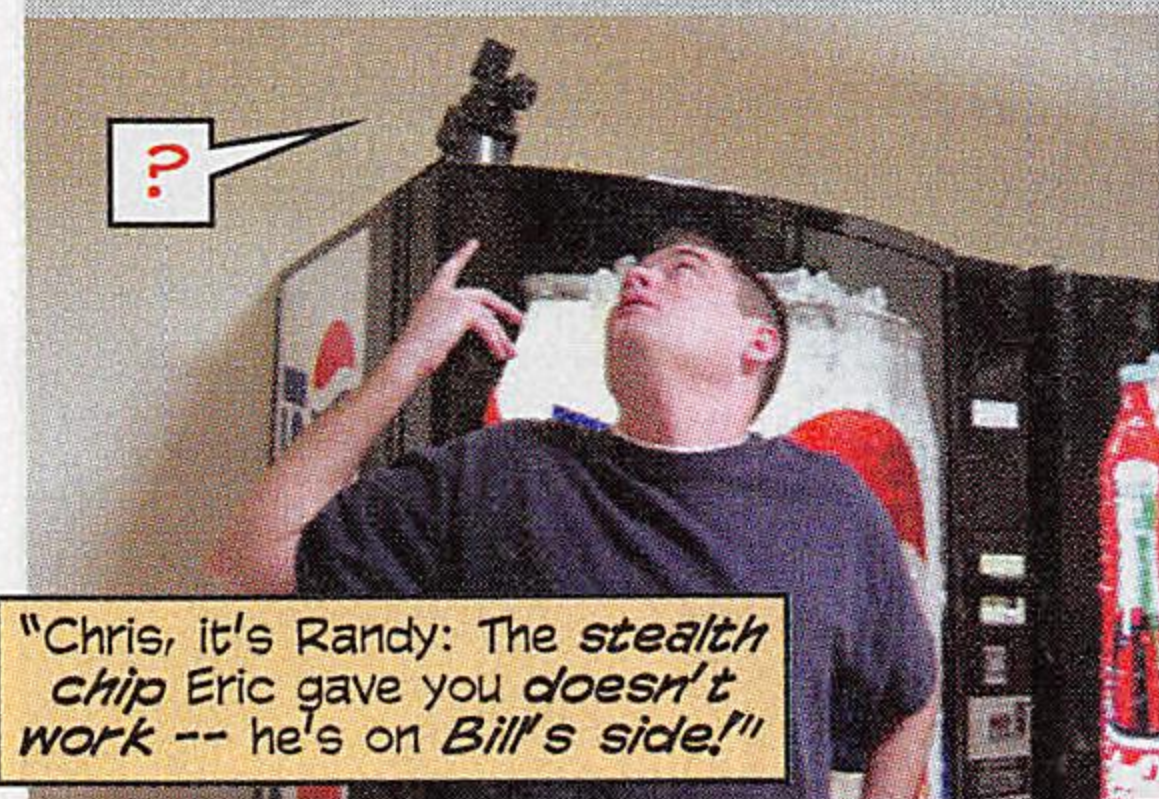
did not make any impact on anybody else because *GTA3* came out. It was supposed to be Hideo Kojima's year! I hate Rockstar for that, but I still enjoy their games.

Nicholas Marakas, Montreal, QC

Some kind of announcement from Namco about a new *Ace Combat*. And I also

DOWNTIME

Hey, only 99% of our time is spent on playing games! We do other stuff, too!

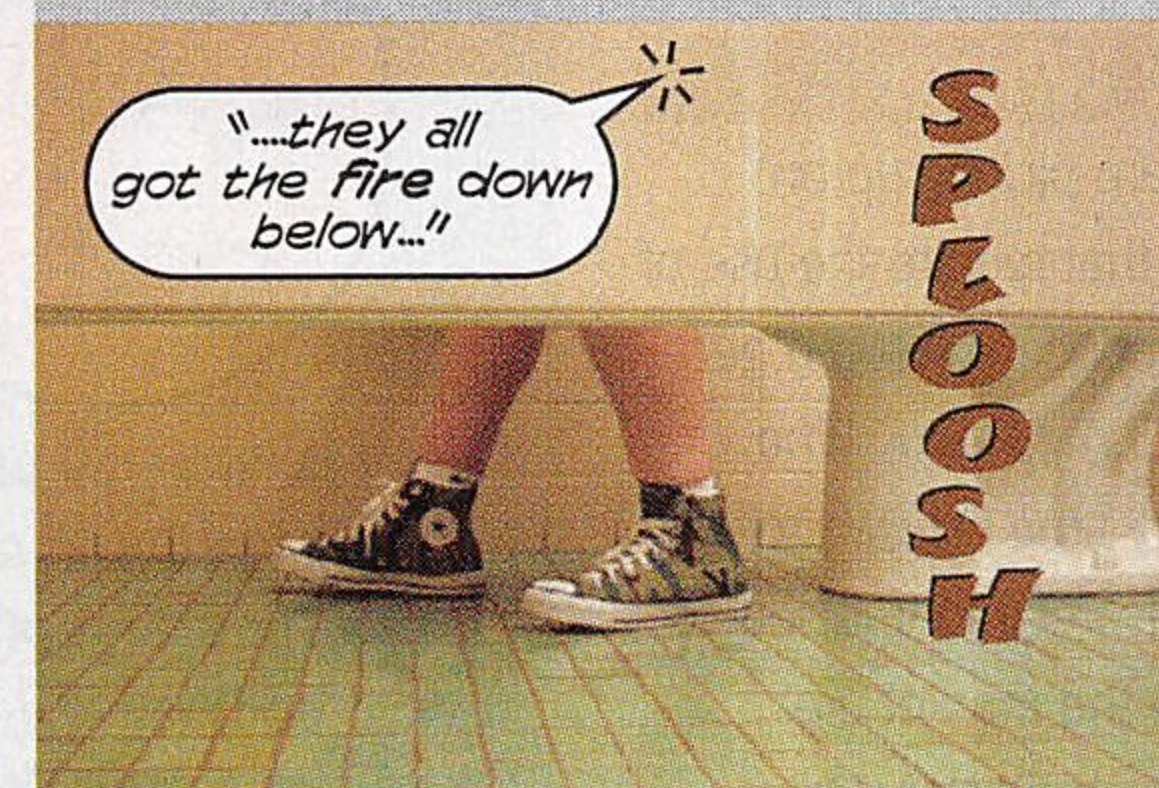


"Chris, it's Randy: The *stealth chip* Eric gave you *doesn't work* -- he's on *Bill's side!*"

▲ Things got hairy this month when we discovered that Bill was a member of the La Li Lu Le Lo.



▲ Steve had the last laugh, though—Eric's mind powers soon faded, and various rashes followed.



▲ When Bill starts singing Bob Seger in the stall, that's your cue to GET THE HELL OUT OF THERE.



▲ It's not that Randy wants to do bad things... but, y'know.

Forget that fool --eat the cookies!

after being completely set for release years back. I even put your lid sticker on my PSX in anticipation! Looking at the increasing level in realistic violence in games now (*Grand Theft Auto* series, new *Silent Hill* and *Clock Tower*, etc.) and the sheer graphical power of next-gen systems, one would think the world could be ready, now, for a possible re-release (if you could call the first a "release"). Is there any word on companies interested in purchasing the title?

Carl Dillman, yggdrasilx@yahoo.com

RANDY Sorry, Carl, but *Thrill Kill* is, well... killed. Electronic Arts owns the rights to the game, and they are opposed to releasing any M rated titles, so that's that. Another company could possibly buy the rights back from EA, but the chances of that happening are about as slim as they get.

Who You Callin' Short?

I am impressed! In the Scoreboard section of your last issue, you refer to *Evolution Snowboarding* as "nasty, brutish, and short". Who knew videogame reviewers could quote Sir Thomas Hobbes?

Joshua Sullivan,
jsulliva@students.wisc.edu

BILL Actually, Josh, I believe the reviewer was quoting "Calvin And Hobbes".

Hardly Hard Drive

I just got finished reading your April 2003 edition, and I read the letter from Scott Traynore regarding the status of the hard drive. I, too, am very concerned about the Hard Drive, because I have been anxiously awaiting *FFXI* ever since it was announced. I also know that you can't play it without the Hard Drive. In your response to Scott's letter, you said that the HD probably wouldn't be out until late this year. So does that mean that *FFXI* will also be released later this year or will it be pushed back until next year?

j.d., slo_laggy@yahoo.com

STEVE Well, according to the latest news, *FFXI* is slated for a November release, roughly around the same time as *FFX-2*. Now, we do know that there are currently

beta tests going on for *XI* and that Square is apparently going to make an announcement soon. Also, with E3 just around the corner, I assume that both Sony and Square will be talking about the hard drive, but no current release date has yet been announced. Again, I predict it will be out around the Fall timeframe, just in time for *FFXI* and the other games that are being developed with it in mind.

Smart Kids, Alien Parents?

I have a 16 year old son who loves all kinds of sports, is one of the smartest kids at his school, is kind and thoughtful and a little shy. He plays against the kids in the neighborhood on the PlayStation and always figures things out quickly.

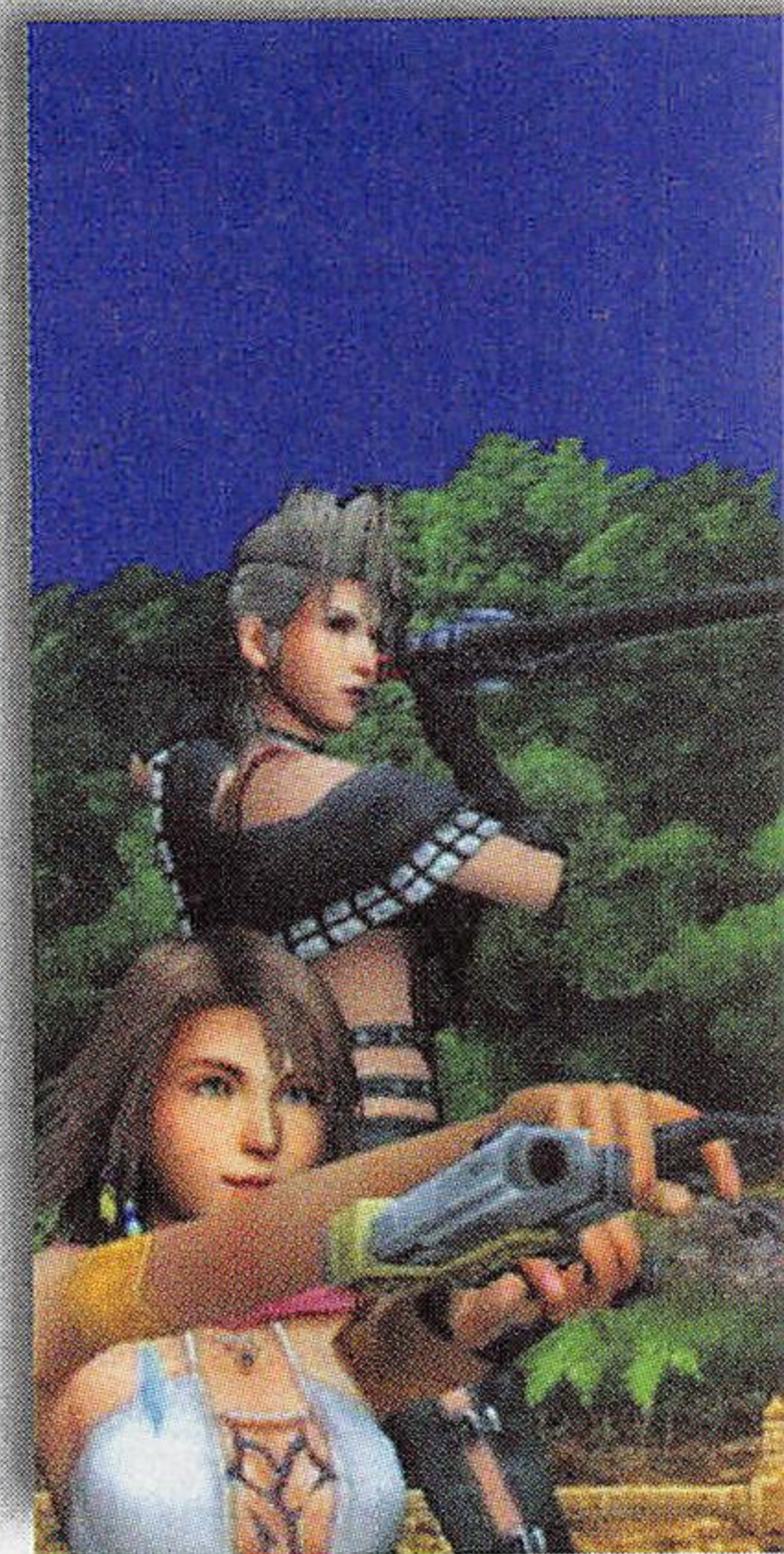
My point? He's very interested in working for a company that designs games for PlayStation. How does one go about persuading a career in this field? He's at that point in his high school (10th) grade where he's making choices, but is not sure what will give him the most benefits. I am no help, I'm a laborer. My kids are so smart that my husband and I wonder... was it the mailman or an alien takeover at birth? Any suggestions would be appreciated.

Raeann Franceschini,
chipmunks4@peoplepc.com

ERIC Ummm, wouldn't you know if it were the mailman? I'm voting alien takeover... Anyhow, there are a number of ways to get a job in video games. More and more colleges are creating actual game design curriculums, so definitely scour the catalogs for those. You can also try to get hired as a game tester for a developer or publisher. Check their websites to see who's close to you and may be hiring. Also, the grassroots approach for PC players is to get involved with map making and "modding"—a great many developers recruit directly from these ranks.

Cheatin' Chips

A friend of mine had just recently paid \$20 for a "chip" to be installed in his PS2. Now he can copy any game as long as he has a blank disk. Wouldn't this be illegal by copyright laws? He



▲ Fans can't wait for the release of *Final Fantasy XI* and *Final Fantasy X-2*!

GAMES WE WANT TO SEE

TURTLEEVANIA

Two of Konami's biggest franchises merge to create a comical, yet creepy, action-adventure game like none other. Playing as the mutant, amphibian vampire hunter Simon Shellmont, you would fight your way through the previously undiscovered and monster-infested Transylvanian sewer system, using your trusty whip, along with a katana, bo staff, sais, and nunchaku. Health power-ups would appear in the form of pizzas, and you'd need all of them you could find in order to confront your ultimate enemy: the evil Count Shredula.

demand something on Eric's Wega/AIBO legged contraption!

Dan St.George, Tieton, WA

Eh, besides the 'booth babes'? Well... um, probably a game based on Bill Donohue. Beer caps can be the primary weapon and maybe a busted beer bottle as a short range weapon. And, of course, an

unlockable gorilla costume...

Skylar Flores, San Antonio, TX

The E3 babes, of course!

Alan Diego, Los Angeles, CA

Non-press-oriented persons being able to enter!

Kevin Nokizaru, La Crescenta, CA

I'm looking forward to some more information on "lost projects," like the Hard Disc Drive, *MGS3*, and *LoD 2*.

Erik Shircel, Sheboygan, WI

I'm looking forward to the announcement from SquareSoft. Hopefully, they will give us more insight on the upcoming *Final Fantasy* and *Kingdom Hearts* series. *Final*

Fantasy X-2 is out in Japan and I can't wait for it to come to the U.S. SquareSoft has given us confirmation on *Kingdom Hearts 2* and *Final Fantasy XII*; all they need to do now is talk about it.

Alex Hoang, Lawndale, CA

What's an E3???

Kyle Jones, Albany, NY

THIS MONTH,
I ANSWER
ACTUAL GAME
QUESTIONS!!!



HARDCORE

We're Everywhere!

I was playing the game *Motor Mayhem* yesterday when I noticed something. When I was playing in on the VCL Coliseum area, I noticed a flashing ad billboard on the top level of the arena that had an ad for PSM on it. Did you guys have to pay for the ad or was it just randomly inserted?

Mark Niegelsky,
markniegelsky@yahoo.com

STEVE Infogrames was nice enough to include that PSM billboard just as a "thank you" to us. In fact, you're actually going to see a lot more PSM stuff appearing in various upcoming videogames. For example, *Silent Hill 3* (and possibly *Auto Modellista*) will have a PSM item that can be unlocked.

asked me if I wanted the chip and I said I'd ask you guys. What do you think about this chip? Do you think I should get it so all I have to do is rent the game and basically own it?

Dustin, jhahn@netnet.net

RANDY Yes, copying games is illegal. So, no, you shouldn't chip your system and copy games. Kinda makes sense, huh? Companies are really cracking down on people who copy games, so you should definitely make your friend aware.

Sorry Sequels

I was just wondering why companies spend so much time on sequels, when they could be spending all that valuable time on making a much better game. The only reason I can think for making a sequel is because it sells right away. Why not just take the whole Squaresoft approach of making different games, with different characters, and stick the same old name on it with proceeding numbers; like all the *Final Fantasy* games?

Josh Beedy, skybeedy@hotmail.com

STEVE You just answered your own question, Josh. The reason game companies

ASK THE 800-LB. GORILLA

I was over at my friend's house, and were were talking about naughty videogames. He told me about this one arcade game from Japan called *Boong-ga Boong-ga*. To play this game, you use this "plastic finger". The screen has a picture of a guy bending over, and then you stick your "finger" into this fake butt. Um... could you please tell me why someone would want to do this to us?

Andrew Bohnert, dillerdragon101@hotmail.com

BILL Well, Andrew, this appears to be a discrete cry for help from the Japanese people. It seems there's a major shortage of proctologists in that fair country and this arcade game is their way of discovering who has the gentle... um... talent for... uh... probing (yeah, that's it... probing) without bringing on the much-feared Divine Wind. Either that, or those guys are

truly messed up. By the way, you do know that they invented the phrase "Pull my finger", don't you?

Was the Princess really in another castle, or was she just hiding, 'cuz I wouldn't honor her damn restraining order?

Mario (aka Joe Asphahani,
jaspahaha@hotmail.com)

BILL Actually, "Mario", the Princess was last seen in Wario's go-kart. They were heading south, towards Mexico, and her brassiere was tied to the kart's antenna. I'd say it was time for a new girlfriend...

Have a question that requires a thoughtful, adult answer? Send an e-mail to bdonohue@futurenetworkusa.com, with "800-LB. Gorilla" in the Subject Line.

make sequels is the same reason why movie companies make sequels. It makes them lots of money. If you have a game that sells a lot of copies, then you'll naturally want to make another one in order to do the same thing. Remember, game companies can only continue making games if they continue to make money.

Sugar And Spice?

Alright, I'm an avid gamer, and I'm a girl. Now that you're over that initial surprise, I'll give you another: there are a lot of us out here. So here's another heads up: I'm not big on cute and cuddly. I want carnage and mayhem. I just want you and everyone else out there to know that just because I'm a girl doesn't mean that all I play is games like *Barbie Explorer*. So be careful when you bash a girl gamer—we may decide to go all Jill Valentine on your butt, and I don't mean in a mini skirt and tube top.

Audrey Tesch, adax@paulding-net.com

ERIC More power to you, Audrey! We're getting more and more letters and contest entries from hardcore gamers who just happen to be of the female persuasion. We hope you regard any potential slight we make against girl gamers as the same sort

of teasing we goofy guys do to one another (It's a male bonding thing, I think). On the other hand, if you actually are playing *Barbie Explorer*, you've got it coming—and that goes for our male readers, too.

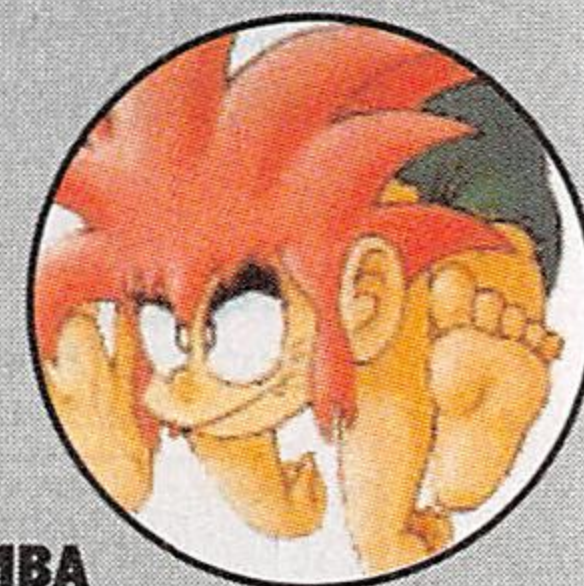
More Guns, Less Whine

How come no companies are picking up on shoot-'em-up type games that require the use of lightguns? 3DO used to produce awesome gun games: *Mad Dog McCree*, *Crime Patrol*, *Who Shot Johnny Rock*, etc. Every time I show those games to people, they really get into it. It seems the only gun games out on the market are something like *Point Blank*, which isn't really exciting in my opinion. I'd love to see *Mad Dog*, etc, surface on the PS2. Wouldn't you?

Dustin Walker, stillhrash@yahoo.com

RANDY You can find those old laserdisc gun games on DVD, but they're not compatible with PS2 lightguns unfortunately. Lightgun games made for PS2, including *Time Crisis II*, aren't too few and far between, but the genre as a whole hasn't really evolved that much over the years.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



TOMBA Sony's pink-haired wild man left the world of gaming for a very brief stint in Hollywood, serving as a stunt double for washed up Australian "actor" Yahoo Serious. Nowadays, the brightly coiffed ex-game character makes stand-in appearances at autograph signings and promotional appearances for aspiring singer Kelly Osbourne, due to his eerie physical similarities to the bratty, potty-mouthed star of MTV's highly rated reality series *The Osbournes*.

THE MAFIA WILL COME AND DESTROY ALL THE X-BOXES AND GAMECUBES!

Stephanie Morrow, Painesville, OH

I hope that Sony finally reveals the HDD for the PS2 and maybe start getting some release dates to games such as *Final Fantasy XI*.

Josh Simmons, Rocky Mount, VA

I'd probably like to see one of you cooped-up losers actually scoring a date with a real girl.

Michael Bartlein, Mequon, WI

I most look forward to the new upcoming RPGs planned for PS2. I expect some great new gaming titles to appear.

Michelle C, Preston, CT

Um, lets see... a moshpit, foodstands, comic book stalls, a beyblade tournament, live bands, cosplays...

Jin Shayu, Manila, AL

I would really like to see a huge amount of online compatible games coming out that don't charge to play. If companies don't start coming out with more online

compatible games, I just think that PS2 network adapter was a waste of money for a ton of people.

Andy Lucio, Alamo, TX

The boys at the Microsoft booth crying because they know their system is going in the crapper.

Joey Mott, Arlington, VA

NEXT MONTH

PS2 SUMMER HEATWAVE!

Whether you like RPGs, action or horror, we'll have can't-miss reviews for you next month: *Arc the Lad: Twilight of the Spirits*, *X2 Wolverine's Revenge*, *Evil Dead: Fist Full of Boomstick*, Capcom's *Chaos Legion*, *Resident Evil: Dead Aim* and more!

PSM Makes The Ultimate PS2 Movie!

What happens when you try to write a movie based on the top PlayStation 2 characters? We're not sure, but next month we'll all get to find out together. Get ready for a healthy dose of freaky funny madness as only PSM can serve it up.



WRITE THIS CAPTION!

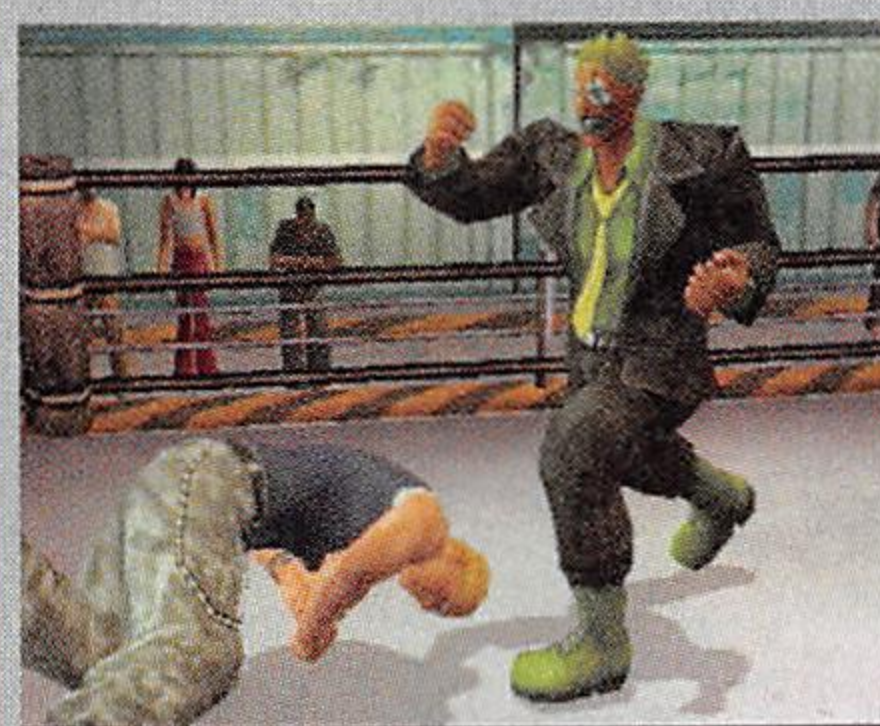


▲ WRITE A FUNNY CAPTION FOR THIS PICTURE!

Jot down a funny caption for the above screen, and if we like yours the best, we'll send you a PSM Prize Pack filled with cool PlayStation 2 goodies! Just send an e-mail with your entry to psm@futurenetworkusa.com, with the subject header "PSM Caption #72" (or send your entry to **PSM Caption #72, c/o Future Network USA, Brisbane, CA 94005**). Be sure to include your full name and address so we can contact you if you win!

AND THE WINNER IS...

JEFF WARD of Spokane, WA, is the winner of our February Caption Contest (you can check out his winning caption below). Jeff, your PSM Prize Pack is on the way!



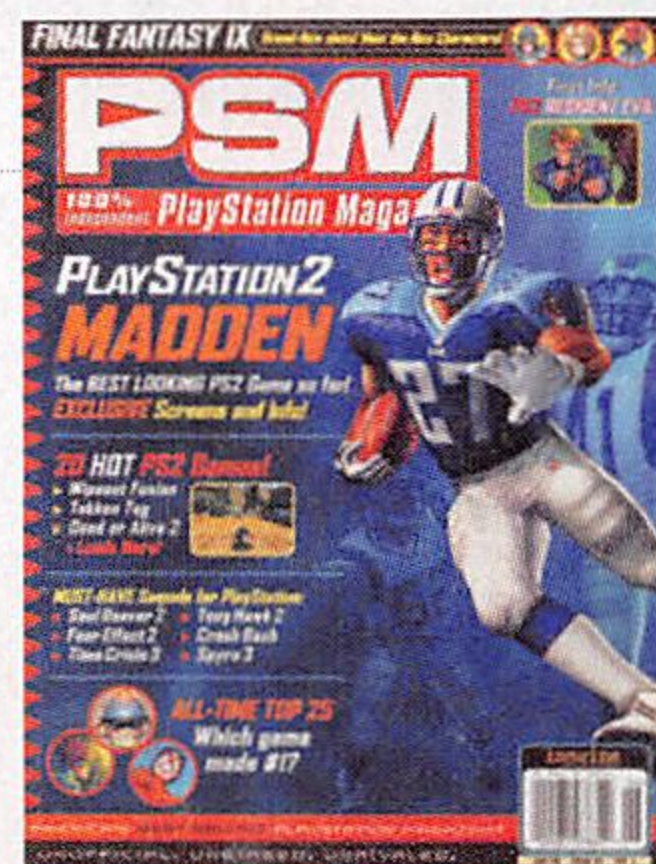
▲ "First rule of Clown Club... don't talk about Clown Club."

3 YEARS AGO IN PSM... June, 2000 Hot Lotta Games!

Looking back at our June 2000 issue, what strikes us the most is the sheer number of huge games we featured that month. We had your first-ever look at *Madden's* jump to the PlayStation 2, and tons of new *Final Fantasy XI* screens, plus cool stuff on *Wipeout Fusion*, *Tekken*

Tag and lots of games that end with the number "2" (*Dead or Alive 2*, *Soul Reaver 2*, *Fear Effect 2*, *Tony Hawk 2*, etc.).

This issue also featured our all-time Top 25 PSone games, with our top five being (counting down) *Tony Hawk Pro Skater*, *Ridge Racer Type 4*, *Resident Evil 2*, *Ape Escape*, and *Metal Gear Solid* at number one. Hmm... yeah, we'd still pick *MGS* as our favorite PSone game—it may just even edge out its PS2 sequel...



▲ Look out, dude — those ghost players back there ain't slowin' down! Run, man, RUUUUUUUUNNN!

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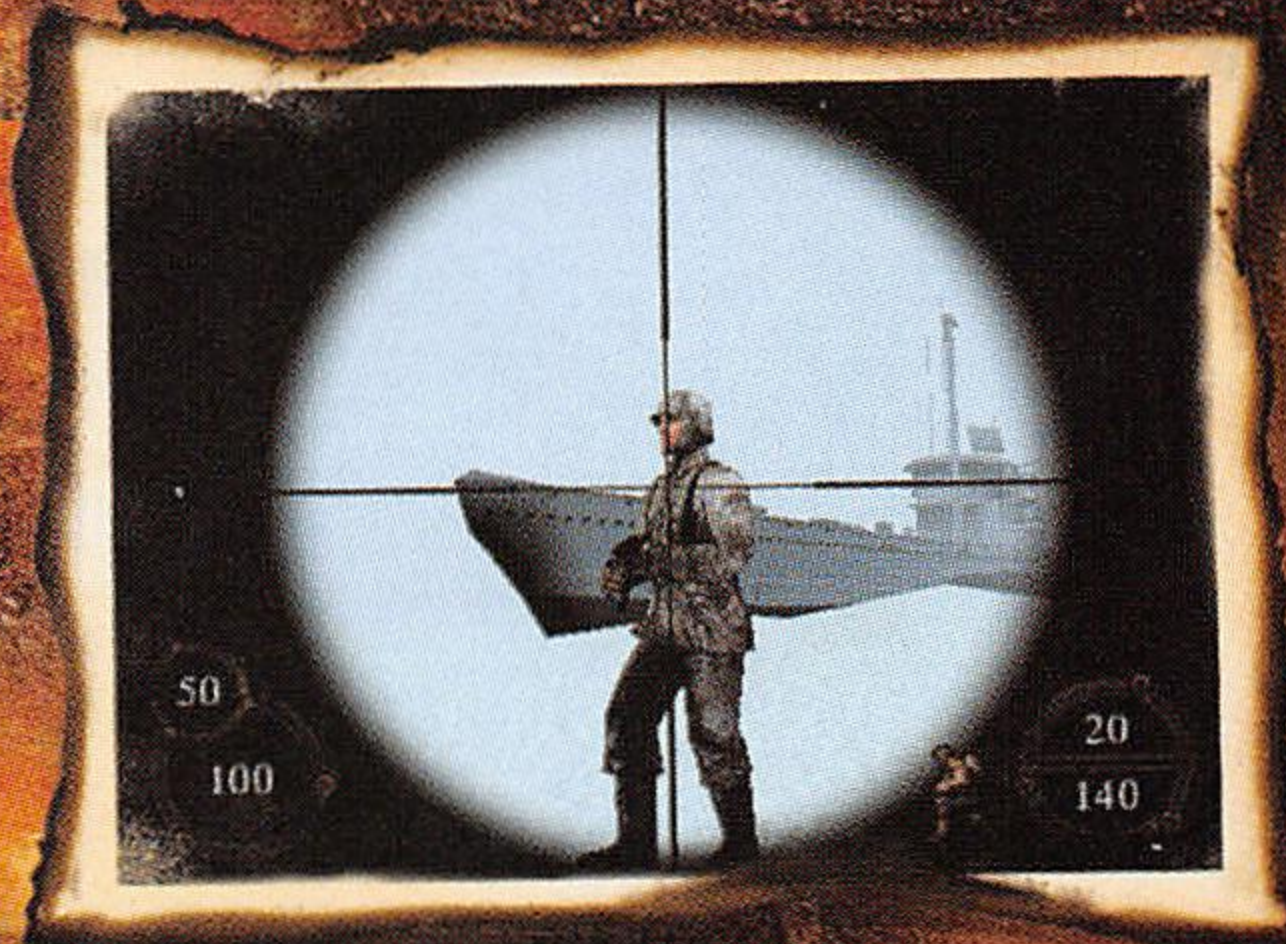
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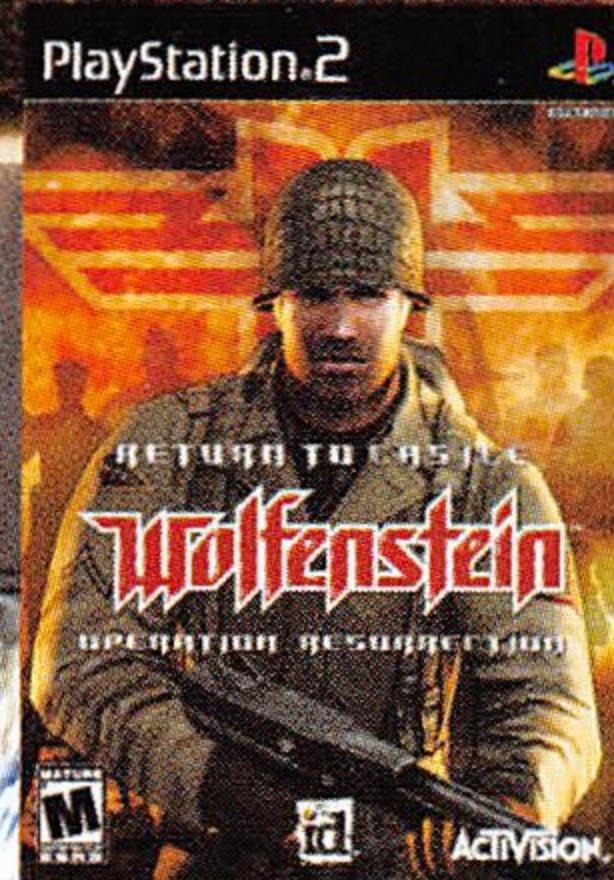
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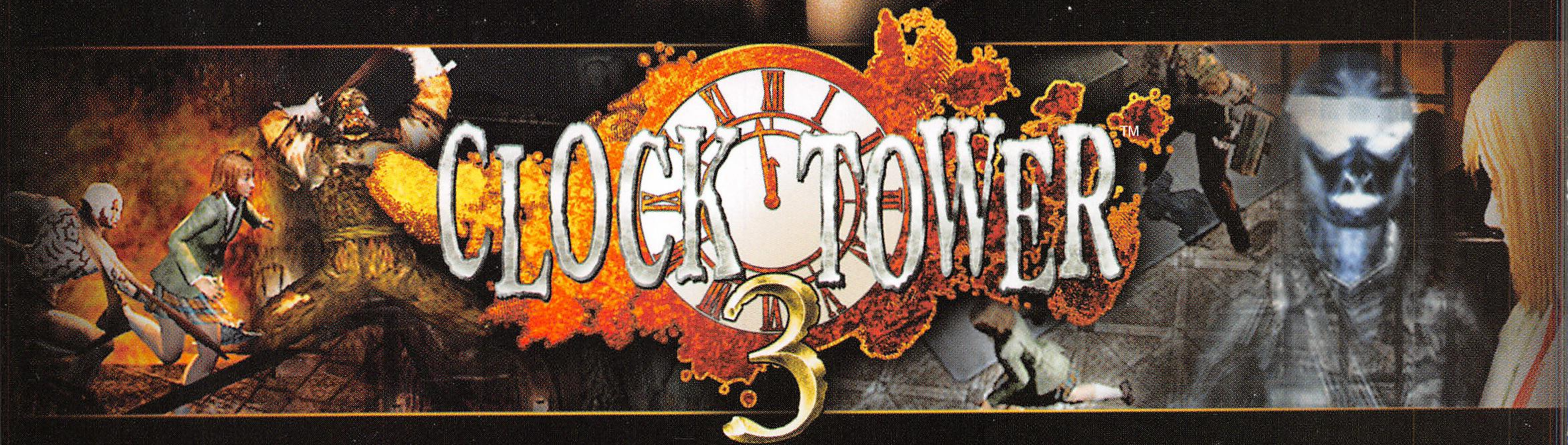
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